TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

THE IDW COLLECTION V6

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MUTANIMALS #1

art by ANDY KUHN
colors by NICK FILARDI

HERE'S WHAT I'M SAYING. YOU HAVE REGULAR NULL COLA. OKAY? THEN YOU ALSO HAVE *CHERRY* COLA. AND *LEMON* COLA. AND *VANILLA* COLA. WHAT DO THEY HAVE IN COMMON?

CHERRY. LEMON. VANILLA. ALL FRUITS!

PETE, VANILLA ISN'T—

BUT WHAT'S THE *BEST* FRUIT?

HMM. THAT'S PRETTY SUBJECTIVE. IT DEPENDS ON PERSONAL TASTE, CULTURAL BACKGROUND, EXPOSURE TO—

RIGHT! BLUEBERRIES! SO WHY ISN'T THERE A BLUEBERRY COLA?!

I... I DON'T KNOW, PETE.

DOESN'T KNOW... WHY THERE'S NO... BLUEBERRY COLA...

UH, PETE? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WRITING DOWN WHAT YOU'RE SAYING. YOU KNOW, FOR HOB.

ARE YOU KIDDING ME? IT'S BAD ENOUGH HOB DOESN'T LET ME LEAVE HEADQUARTERS WITHOUT A *CHAPERONE*, BUT HE ALSO TELLS YOU TO *SPY* ON ME?

I UNDERSTAND WHY HE WOULDN'T TRUST ME AT FIRST. BUT HAVEN'T I EARNED IT BY NOW?

DON'T BE CRAZY! ALL HOB SAID WAS, "GO WITH LINDSEY, AND REPORT BACK ON EVERYTHING SHE SAYS AND DOES." NOTHING ABOUT *SPYING* ON YOU!

PETE, YOU LITERALLY JUST DESCRIBED...

YOU KNOW WHAT? NEVER MIND.

PETE!

HOB! IT'S LINDSEY! WE'RE BEING ATTACKED! THREE MEN! THEY HAVE A VAN, LICENSE PLATE NUMBER—

HIS

BANG

STOP, DROP AND ROLL!

WE DON'T KNOW WHERE THE BULLET WILL COME DOWN!

THAT'S NOT THE BULLET YOU NEED TO WORRY ABOUT.

KNOCK IT OFF! WE CAN'T KILL HIM.

WHY NOT? WE'RE HERE FOR THE *GIRL*.

YEAH, AND THIS THING'S A *BONUS*. A BONA FIDE MUTANT!

THE BOSS'LL WANT TO SEE HIM. MAYBE EVEN *VIVISECT* HIM.

SOUNDS GOOD TO ME!

HEY, PETE, WE'RE BACK!

THAT WAS A *LOT* OF FOOT NINJAS WE JUST FOUGHT. LIKE... A *LOT* OF FOOT NINJAS.

YES. WE PREVAILED AGAINST OVERWHELMING ODDS.

WE SHOULD ALL BE PROUD.

ANY OF YOU GUYS SEEN PETE? OR LINDSEY?

THEY PROBABLY GOT SIDETRACKED ON THEIR SUPPLY RUN, PETE SAW AN ICE CREAM TRUCK, OR—

HOB!

IT'S LINDSEY!

WE'RE BEING ATTACKED!

THREE MEN!

THEY HAVE A VAN, LICENSE PLATE NUMBER—

BAANG!

LET'S GO, MUTANIMALS!

GO WHERE? THAT'S NOT EXACTLY A LOT OF INFORMATION TO—

AH, COME ON... WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU, YOU STUPID PIECE OF...

HERE IT IS! I PLANTED A TRACKING DEVICE ON PETE, WEEKS AGO.

AFTER THE BEBOP AND ROCKSTEADY INCIDENT*, IT JUST SEEMED LIKE A GOOD IDEA.

*SEE TMNT #39 - ED.

WAIT A MINUTE, BRO. YOU DON'T HAVE, LIKE... TRACKING DEVICES ON *ALL* OF US, DO YOU?

NO, OF COURSE NOT.

YOU'RE JUST BEING PARANOID.

JILLIAN?

HI, I'M—WAIT, YOU GUYS KNOW EACH OTHER?

WE USED TO WORK TOGETHER.

AND SHE'S MY EX-GIRLFRIEND.

HEY, LINDSEY. DON'T BE MAD, OKAY? I WANTED TO SHOW YOU MY NEW LAB, AND MAYBE OFFER YOU A JOB? SO I ASKED MY EMPLOYER TO TRACK YOU DOWN.

AND WHEN I SAW WHAT A MESS YOU WERE IN, I THOUGHT, HEY, SHE NEEDS HELP, I NEED HELP, MAYBE WE CAN KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE.

NOT THAT WE KILL BIRDS HERE! BUT, COME INSIDE, AND WE CAN TALK MORE ABOUT—

WAIT, I— I'M BEING KIDNAPPED FOR A JOB? *AGAIN?*

DOESN'T ANYONE JUST POST A HELP-WANTED AD ANYMORE?

AND WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT HIM?

WE'LL DROP HIM OFF. RIGHT BACK WHERE WE FOUND HIM, NO HARM DONE!

GOOD. FINE.

TAKE HIM TO THE RAIL YARD.

HOW DID YOU DO ALL THIS, JILLIAN?

SO, I WORK FOR A SUBSIDIARY OF THE NULL GROUP.

YOU KNOW, THE CORPORATE CONGLOMERATE THAT MAKES, LIKE... PRETTY MUCH EVERYTHING?

WE MANAGED TO SUCCESSFULLY CREATE SOME MUTANTS.

BUT NOW WE'RE TRYING TO *COMBINE* DNA TYPES. CREATE THE ULTIMATE MUTANT.

COMBINING MUTANT TYPES! CAN I SEE THEM?

WELL, I MEAN... THERE AREN'T ANY MUTANTS HERE RIGHT NOW. WE'VE HIT A WALL.

THAT'S KIND OF WHERE I WAS HOPING YOU'D COME IN?

WAIT, BUT—WHERE DID YOU GET THE MUTAGEN? THERE ISN'T MUCH LEFT. THE OLD STOCKGEN SUPPLY. BURNOW ISLAND. THE FOOT CLAN.

BINGO! I MEAN, YOU REALLY THINK THE *FOOT CLAN* COULD MAKE MUTANTS ON THEIR OWN? NO WAY. SO THEY OUTSOURCED IT TO US.

YOU'RE WORKING FOR THE *FOOT CLAN?*

HEY, YOU WANT TO COMPARE NOTES? YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S HANGING OUT WITH MUTANT TERRORISTS. AND HELPING THEM MAKE MORE MUTANT TERRORISTS.

BESIDES, ALL OF THAT POLITICAL STUFF IS LIKE 18 LEVELS OF BUREAUCRACY ABOVE ME. MY JOB IS TO RUN A LAB FOR A FORTUNE 100 COMPANY, AND PULL IN TOTALLY KICKASS SALARY AND BENEFITS FOR DOING IT.

IT'S A GOOD DEAL, LINDSEY. SO, COME ON! COME WORK WITH ME.

JILLIAN. WE'VE *NEVER* WORKED WELL TOGETHER. PERSONALLY OR PROFESSIONALLY. YOU WERE JUST TOO... TOO *MUCH*.

WEIRD AND *DANGEROUS*, FROM WHAT I'VE HEARD.

THE THING I HAVE GOING NOW? IT'S *WEIRD*. BUT...

I... OKAY. YOU HAVE A POINT.

NO. BUT I'M STILL LISTENING.

SO YOU'RE IN?

THAT'S IT.

YOU'RE SURE?

I'M SURE. PIGEON PETE IS IN THAT VAN.

ALL RIGHT, HERMAN. LET'S BUST HIM LOOSE.

SIR, YES, SIR!

C'MON, PETE!

THAT'S KIND OF A LONG WAYS, I THINK?

MAYBE I COULD ASK THESE GUYS TO SLOW DOWN A LITTLE, OR TAKE A PRACTICE JUMP, OR—

YOU'RE A PIGEON! DON'T JUMP, SOLDIER! *FLY!*

HEY! I CAN FLY! I CAN—

—NEVER MIND! I CAN'T FLY! I CAN'T FLY!

HEY, MISTER! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

HI... I'M PETE.

SHOULDN'T WE, LIKE, STOP AND HELP HIM?

NAH. HE'S ALL RIGHT.

AND THESE GUYS *DON'T* GET TO ESCAPE.

WATCH OUT FOR THOSE CIVILIANS!

THERE *ARE* NO CIVILIANS.

HEY, BUDDY. I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU. WELL, THAT'S A LIE. BUT I *WON'T* HURT YOU, IF YOU TELL ME WHERE LINDSEY BAKER IS.

I—I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ANY OF THAT—

MONDO. SEARCH HIS POCKETS.

HOO

I GET IT. IT'S HARD, TRUSTING STRANGERS.

GOOD TO MEET YOU, MR. MEIRING, OF HEMPSTEAD, NEW YORK.

NICE-LOOKING FAMILY.

DOG FAMILY.

SO. NOW THAT WE KNOW EACH OTHER A LITTLE BETTER...

... YOU WANT TO TALK BEFORE I RIP YOUR THROAT OUT?

IS THIS—

THE MUTAGENIC FILTER YOU WERE DEVELOPING AT STOCKGEN! I'M CONTINUING YOUR WORK, LINDSEY. *OUR* WORK.

I HAVE TO ADMIT, THIS ALL FEELS A BIT—

LIKE COMING HOME?

DISQUIETING. I WAS GOING TO SAY, DISQUIETING.

BUT YES, I SUPPOSE IT DOES FEEL LIKE COMING HOME. IN A DISQUIETING SORT OF—

WE'RE HERE TO RESCUE YOU, LINDSEY.

LIKE THEY RESCUED ME!

WAIT...

...WHAT *IS* THIS PLACE?

IT'S JUST A LAB. OKAY? AND IT'S PRIVATE PROPERTY. SO YOU NEED TO—

NO. I'VE BEEN IN PLACES LIKE THIS. IT'S NOT A LAB.

IT'S A TORTURE CHAMBER.

WHERE ARE THE MUTANTS?

I— NOT HERE! THEY'RE NOT HERE!

ALL THIS EQUIPMENT, AND NOT A SINGLE TEST SUBJECT?

I DON'T BELIEVE YOU.

FIND THE MUTANTS!

AND THEN KILL EVERY DAMNED SCIENTIST IN THIS PLACE.

YOU SHOULD *RUN.*

WELL, YEAH.

COME *WITH* ME, LINDSEY.

NO. JUST GET OUT OF HERE, JILLIAN.

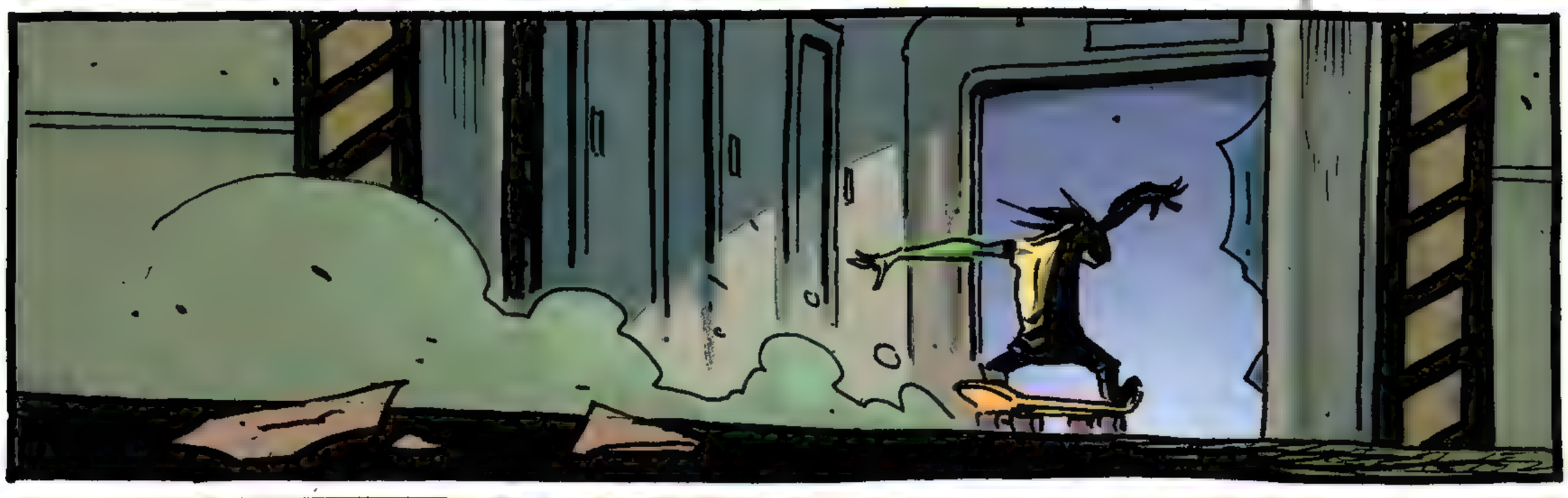
FINE! DON'T TRUST ME.

TRUST THE *MUTANTS* WHO ARE ON A *WARPATH* THROUGH MY LAB.

LOADING DOCK
DAMMIT, JILLIAN. ALWAYS MAKING THINGS COMPLICATED.

WHERE'S THAT SCIENTIST BOSS-LADY, LINDSEY?
WHERE'D SHE GO?

SHE WENT THAT WAY... THE BACK OF THE LAB. I—I THINK THERE'S AN EXIT, BACK THERE.



TEAR IT ALL DOWN!

JILLIAN, WAIT! I'M COMING WITH YOU.

I TOTALLY KNEW YOU WOULD. I MEAN, YOU'RE NOT AN IDIOT!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

I'M CALLING MY BOSS! SO THEY CAN SEND IN THE CAVALRY, OR WHATEVER.

COULDN'T WE WAIT A COUPLE MORE MINUTES? GIVE THEM TIME TO CLEAR OUT?

I—JEEZ, LINDSEY. THEY'RE ATTACKING THE LAB.

I UNDERSTAND THAT, BUT—

OUR LAB. YOU'RE EITHER WITH ME OR YOU'RE NOT. RIGHT?

NULL INDUSTRIES

ATTACKED?

ATTACKED BY *WHAT?*

OH. OH... I SEE. YES, OF COURSE.

I'LL INFORM THE *CEO.*

ANOTHER EMPTY ONE!

BUT I'LL CHECK UNDER THE BED.

H H

THIS ONE'S LOCKED. NONE OF THE OTHER ONES WERE LOCKED.

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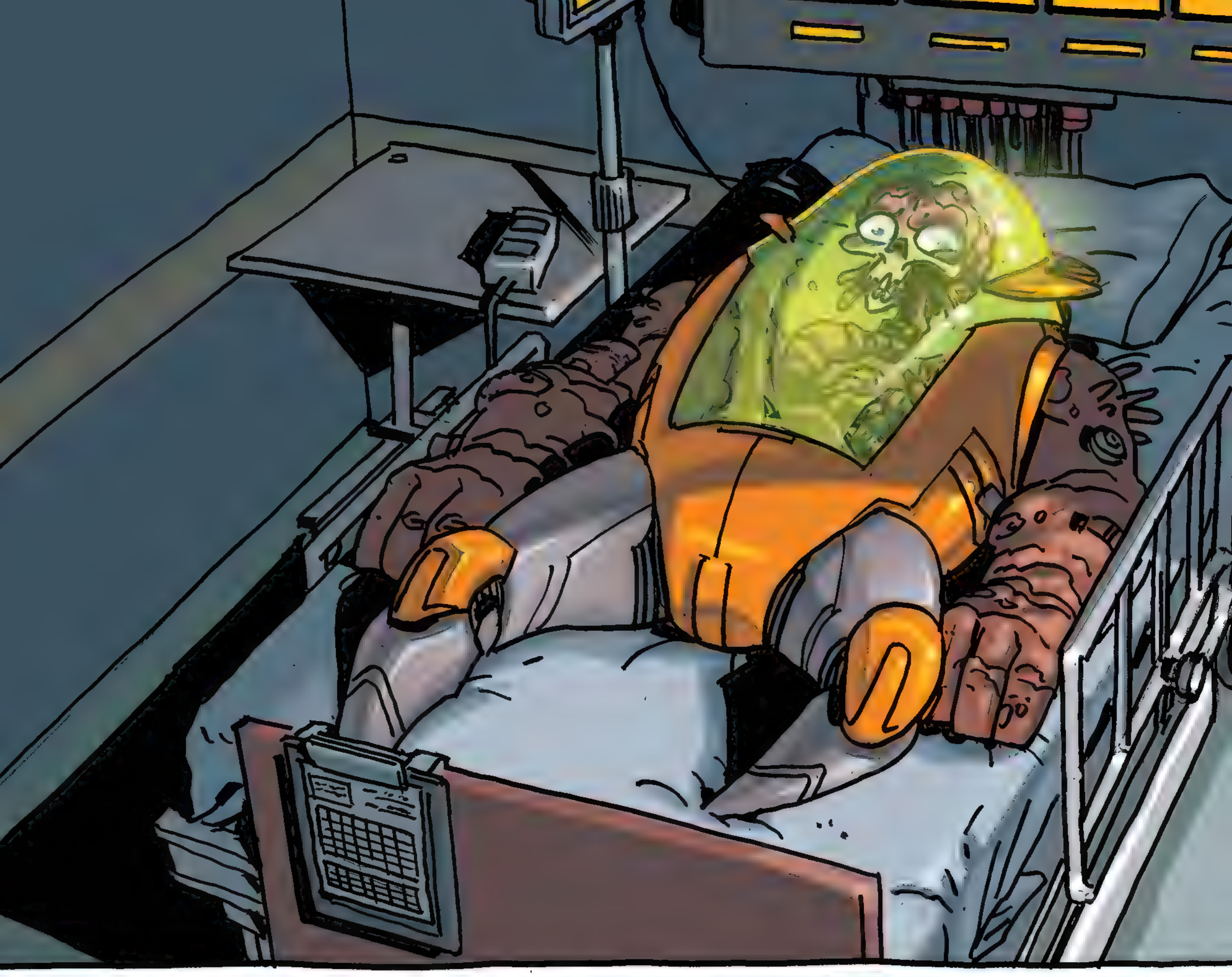
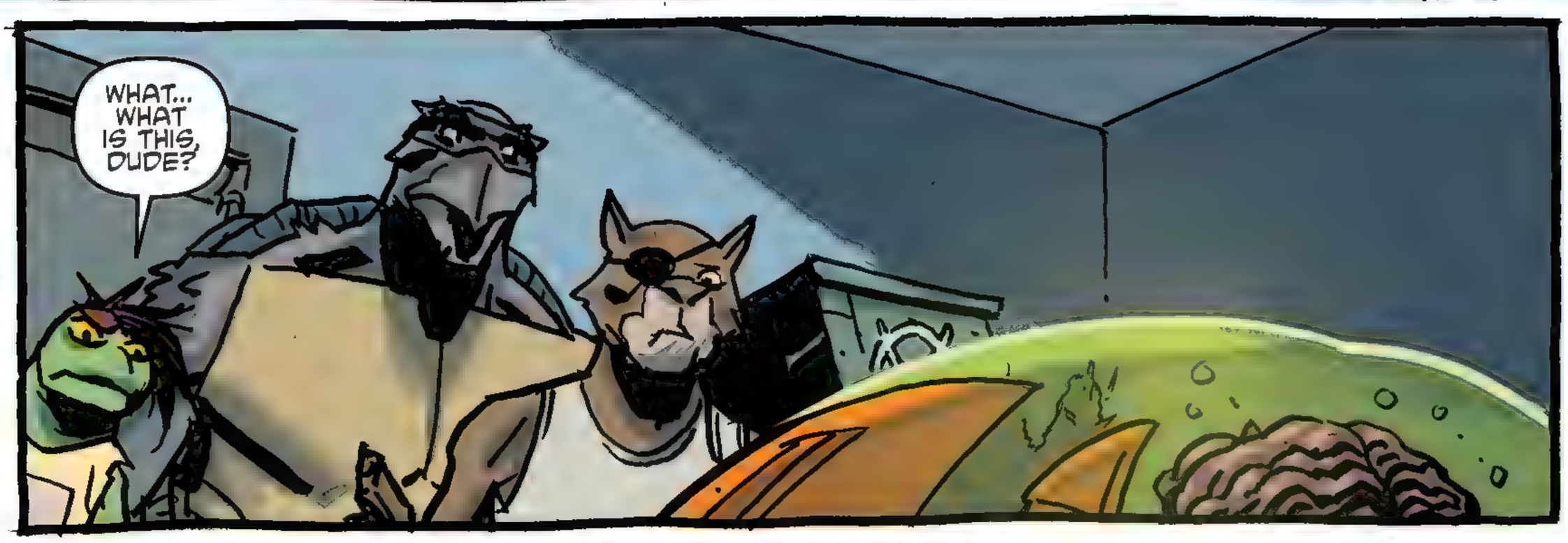



WHAT... WHAT IS THIS, DUDE?

THIS IS A MUTANT. "THE MUTAGEN MAN." A HYBRID OF... DOZENS OF ANIMAL TYPES, IF I'M READING THIS RIGHT.
BUT A MUTANT.

JUST LIKE US.

DON'T WORRY, PAL.

WE'RE HERE TO *SAVE* YOU.

COME ON, MEN. LET'S HELP HIM OUT OF BED.

CLICK

SO, HOW DOES THIS SUIT WORK? CAN YOU *WALK* ON YOUR OWN?

RRRR

I... THAT'S NOT WHAT I—

YOU MISUNDERSTAND. THIS IS AN *EXTRACTION* MISSION.

ON YOUR FEET, SOLDIER!

GET HIM IN THE VAN! THE REST OF US ARE GONNA TORCH THIS PLACE!

HEY, UH, HOB?

I'M THINKING THESE DUDES MIGHT NOT LIKE THAT PLAN.

THAT'S QUITE A HEAVY FORCE. A STRATEGIC RETREAT MIGHT BE IN ORDER, SIR.

AND LEAVE THIS LAB STANDING? I DON'T THINK SO.

WE CAN COME BACK AND TORCH THIS PLACE TOMORROW, BOSS. WE HAVE A BIGGER PRIORITY, NOW.

YOU'RE RIGHT. LET'S GET HIM TO SAFETY.

HOLD YOUR FIRE, BOSS'S ORDERS, THEY'VE GOT PRECIOUS CARGO.

NULL SECURITY

ALL RIGHT.

...

WE'VE GOT OURSELVES A WAR.

art by BEN BATES

MUTANIMALS #2

art by ANDY KUHN
colors by NICK FILARDI

DAIRYLAND
2%
MILK
LATE-NIGHT POST-BATTLE MUNCHIES? ME TOO, DUDE.
HMM.
HEY... YOU ALL RIGHT THERE, MY MAN?
WHAT? OH. MONDO. YES, I'M FINE.
I'M JUST... NEVER SURE WHAT TO DO WITH MYSELF, OFF-DUTY.
I LIVE ON THE BATTLEFIELD, AND NEED TO LEARN HOW TO UNWIND DURING R&R.
YOU SEEM TO HAVE NO SUCH PROBLEM.
HA. YEAH, BRO. I KIND OF MADE A LITTLE DEAL WITH MYSELF: I'LL DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO HELP HOB, AND FIGHT FOR THE CAUSE, AND ALL THAT RIGHTEOUS NOISE.
BUT THE *REST* OF THE TIME? I'LL DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO *RELAX*, AND JUST NOT THINK ABOUT IT.
ESPECIALLY TONIGHT. LOSING LINDSEY WAS SUCH A BUMMER. AND THAT MUTAGEN MAN...
I KNOW THIS ISN'T VERY NICE, BUT THAT DUDE REALLY CREEPS ME OUT. HE SEEMS PRETTY... *DAMAGED*, YOU KNOW?
HE'S JUST LOST, MONDO. HE NEEDS SOMEONE TO POINT HIM BACK IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.
WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THEY DID TO HIM IN THAT LAB...

"...OR WHO *THEY* EVEN ARE."

DID YOU KNOW THAT IT ONLY TAKES EIGHT POUNDS OF PRESSURE PER SQUARE INCH TO CRACK A HUMAN SKULL?

I... I DID NOT KNOW THAT. BUT I'M CERTAINLY NOT SURPRISED.

OF COURSE NOT. AS A SCIENTIST, YOU UNDERSTAND THE FUNDAMENTAL WEAKNESS OF YOUR SPECIES.

LINDSEY UNDERSTANDS, LIKE, *EVERYTHING?* SHE'S THE MOST BRILLIANT SCIENTIST I'VE EVER MET, MADAME NULL. ESPECIALLY IN THE FIELD OF MUTAGEN RESEARCH.

IF THAT'S TRUE, THEN WHY WOULD I STILL NEED YOU?

BECAUSE... BECAUSE YOU CAN'T *TRUST* HER!

NOT WITHOUT ME AROUND TO KEEP THINGS ON TRACK.

WELL, MS. BAKER? *CAN* I TRUST YOU?

OF COURSE NOT. WE JUST MET. AND YOU CAN NEVER TRUST *ANYBODY* YOU DON'T KNOW.

HMM. THAT'S TRUE. YET ANOTHER WEAKNESS OF THE HUMAN RACE.

WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, MA'AM... THIS IS A *VERY* STRANGE CONVERSATION. JILLIAN LED ME TO BELIEVE THAT I WAS HERE TO TALK ABOUT A JOB.

THAT'S WHAT WE *ARE* TALKING ABOUT, MS. BAKER. A JOB THAT INVOLVES PROBING THE LIMITS OF HUMAN ABILITY, AND REPLACING IT WITH SOMETHING BETTER.

BUT YOU'RE JUST HERE FOR THE *SCIENCE*. ISN'T THAT RIGHT?

THE CHANCE TO BREAK NEW GROUND IN YOUR FIELD, BACKED BY AN OBSCENE BUDGET AND A TOP-FLIGHT FACILITY.

I THINK WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER.

GOOD. I'LL CALL HUMAN RESOURCES, AND WE CAN START YOUR ORIENTATION IMMEDIATELY.

I—I HAVEN'T SAID YES TO THE JOB, YET.

HMM. JILLIAN DIDN'T MENTION THAT YOU'RE FUNNY.

I CERTAINLY HOPE YOU'RE WORTH THE TROUBLE. "RECRUITING" YOU CAUSED SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE TO OUR MAIN LABORATORY.

DON'T WORRY, LINDSEY. CLEAN-UP IS ALREADY UNDERWAY. AND WE'VE INCREASED SECURITY...

"...A BIT."

WELL... CRAP.

NO WAY WE CAN BREAK BACK IN. NOT JUST THE TWO OF US.

SO WE GET THE REST OF THE TEAM, AND COME BACK. THIS WAS JUST RECONNAISSANCE.

NAH. IF THEY RAMPED UP SECURITY THIS MUCH, WHO KNOWS WHAT ELSE THEY'RE PLANNING.

WE NEED TO FIND OUT HOW MANY OTHER MUTANTS THEY HAVE, AND ***WHERE THEY ARE.*** BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.

I WANT TO HELP THOSE MUTANTS, TOO. BUT WE CAN'T JUST RUSH IN GUNS BLAZING, WITHOUT A PLAN.

ALL RIGHT. FOLLOW ME, SLASH.

YOU WANT A PLAN? I GOT US A PLAN.

MUTAGEN MAN! GOOD MORNING, SOLDIER.

I'M SORRY. I WOKE UP, AND THERE WAS NO ONE THERE TO TELL ME WHAT TO DO. SO I LEFT MY ROOM.

I... I HOPE THAT'S OKAY.

OF COURSE! APOLOGIES FOR NOT CHECKING ON YOU SOONER.

I'M JUST INSPECTING OUR ARMS. ONE OF MY DAILY DUTIES AS THE SELF-APPOINTED QUARTERMASTER FOR OUR LITTLE GROUP.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO KEEP MIND AND BODY BUSY. ISN'T THAT RIGHT?

THE SCIENTISTS AT THE LAB KEPT ME VERY BUSY. BUT NOW...

...WHAT SHOULD I... PLEASE TELL ME WHAT I SHOULD DO, NOW.

YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU WANT, BRO. BUT I THINK YOU SHOULD START BY COMING OVER HERE, AND PLAYING A LITTLE *DRAGON WAGON!*

I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF THIS. IS IT A TEST? AN EXPERIMENT?

IT'S A GAME. YOU KNOW, FOR FUN? HAVEN'T YOU EVER...

NEVER MIND, MUTAGEN MAN.

OKAY, I'VE GOTTA SAY SOMETHING. JUST GOTTA BE TOTALLY HONEST, I FEEL *SUPER* WEIRD CALLING YOU "MUTAGEN MAN." DON'T YOU HAVE, LIKE, A *NORMAL* NAME?

NO. I'VE NEVER NEEDED ONE.

ALL RIGHT. IN THAT CASE, I'M GONNA CALL YOU... SEYMOUR GUTZ.

DO YOU KNOW WHY?

NO.

BECAUSE WHEN I LOOK AT YOU, I CAN *SEE MORE GUTS!*

I STILL DON'T KNOW WHY...

...OH!

HA HA HA

HA! YOU HEAR THAT, SLASH? IT'S "COMPLICATED." I THINK HE'S CALLING US A COUPLE OF DUMMIES.

WE'RE PRETTY SMART GUYS. WE'LL DO OUR BEST TO KEEP UP.

...WELL? KEEP TALKIN'.

NULL... NULL IS OBSESSED WITH "ELIMINATING HUMAN WEAKNESS."

OUR WORK STEMS FROM A BELIEF THAT HUMAN WORKERS ARE FRAGILE. COWARDLY. INEFFICIENT. THEY'RE A LIABILITY TO THEIR EMPLOYER.

OUR DIVISION IS WORKING TO CREATE MUTANT HYBRIDS. DEVELOPING THE PERFECT CREATURE FOR ANY OCCUPATION.

WHAT'S THE POINT OF MAKING A HYBRID MUTANT? A REGULAR MUTANT IS ALREADY STRONGER THAN A HUMAN. THEY COULD DO ANY JOB JUST FINE.

BUT THEY WANT MORE THAN FINE.

A MUTANT BAT IN YOUR COAL MINES IS GOOD. BUT A MUTANT WITH THE *DNA* OF A BAT, AN ANT, *AND* A GORILLA...

EXACTLY! WE'RE TARGETING THE WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS JOBS, AT FIRST. MINERS. OILMEN. DEEP-SEA FISHERMEN.

BUT EVENTUALLY, THE ENTIRE LABOR FORCE, FILLED BY THE *PERFECT* WORKER. MADE EVEN MORE PERFECT BY THE FACT THAT THEY'LL HAVE NO SALARY. NO BENEFITS. NO *RIGHTS*.

WE'LL CONTROL THE WORLD'S ECONOMY. AND AS OUR CEO ALWAYS SAYS, IF YOU CONTROL THE WORLD'S ECONOMY... YOU CONTROL THE *WORLD*.

IT'S AN INSANE PLAN, BY INSANE PEOPLE.

PEOPLE LIKE YOU?

ME? NO.

I'M JUST A GUY WITH A MORTGAGE.

HEY. I DON'T REALLY *CARE* ABOUT THE NULL GROUP'S *BUSINESS PLAN.*

I WANT TO KNOW WHERE THE *REST OF THE MUTANTS ARE.*

WHAT?

THE REST OF THE MUTANTS IN THAT LAB.

YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT YOU USED ALL THAT SPACE FOR ONE EXPERIMENT? NO.

THERE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE MORE. BUT WE... WE COULDN'T PERFECT THE PROCESS. JILLIAN—DR. AMANTE—SHE TRIED, BUT THE RESULTS WERE... HORRIBLE.

THEY WERE FAILED EXPERIMENTS. MOST OF THEM DIED. OR WE PUT THEM DOWN.

THERE ARE ONLY TWO LEFT, BESIDES THE ONE YOU RESCUED.

TWO LEFT...

TWO?!

WHERE ARE THEY?

I CAN'T TELL YOU THAT! THEY WOULD *KILL* ME. YOU DON'T KNOW WHO YOU'RE DEALING WITH.

I KNOW EXACTLY WHO I'M DEALING WITH. BUTCHERS AND MADMEN. PEOPLE WHO "PUT DOWN" ANY MUTANT THAT AIN'T UP TO THEIR STANDARDS.

BUT IF YOU AIN'T GONNA ANSWER MY QUESTIONS?

FINE.

THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO SKIN A HUMAN. AND I'D LOVE TO TRY 'EM ALL.

THIS IS *NOT* WHAT WE DO!

IT'S WHAT *I* DO, SLASH.

NOW STEP OUTTA THE WAY, AND LET ME SKIN THIS LITTLE DWEEB ALIVE UNTIL HE TELLS ME WHERE I CAN FIND THOSE OTHER—

THEY'RE AT THE *TRAIN YARD!*

THE MUTANTS ARE BEING HELD IN A TRAIN YARD, IN NORTHERN NEW JERSEY.

A PROPERTY OWNED BY THE NULL GROUP'S UTILITIES DIVISION.

THEY'RE GOING TO BE TRANSPORTED SOON.

THAT'S ALL I KNOW! I SWEAR TO YOU, THAT'S ALL I KNOW.

SEE? I KNEW WHAT I WAS DOING.

AND DON'T WORRY, BUDDY.

I'M NOT GONNA SLICE YOU APART, AFTER ALL.

NO!

FINE. JUST MAKE SURE HE'S WRAPPED UP TIGHT.

GATHER UP, EVERYBODY! SLASH, I NEED YOU TO CHECK PROPERTY RECORDS, FIND OUT WHERE THIS TRAIN YARD IS.

WHAT'S THE PLAN ONCE WE GET THERE?

FIND THE OTHER MUTANTS AND BRING THEM THE HELL BACK.

AND KILL ANYONE WHO GETS IN OUR WAY?

SURE.

HOB... WE SHOULDN'T BE USING VIOLENCE AS A FIRST RESORT. YOU NEED TO THINK THINGS THROUGH.

STOP. I'VE HEARD IT ALL BEFORE, SLASH. BUT THERE'S A REASON WHY I'M THE LEADER, AND—

SO *LEAD* US. BUT REMEMBER THAT WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE *HEROES*. LIKE MICHELANGELO, AND THE REST OF THE TURTLES.

SO LET'S ACT LIKE HEROES. AND NOT LIKE A BUNCH OF *TERRORISTS*.

TERRORISTS? HOW *DARE* YOU CALL ME—

—HOW *DARE* YOU CALL ME A TERRORIST. I'M JUST DOING WHAT I *HAVE* TO DO.

DO YOU *REMEMBER* WHAT THEY DID TO US AT STOCKGEN? DO YOU REMEMBER BEING EXPERIMENTED ON? BEING TESTED? BEING TORTURED? *EVERY DAMN DAY?*

OF *COURSE* I DO. AND I WENT THROUGH ALL OF THAT A LOT LONGER THAN YOU DID, HOB.

EXACTLY! SO YOU OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD UNDERSTAND.

BUT IT'S *OVER* NOW. AND IF WE RESORT TO THOSE SAME TACTICS—

OVER? NOT FOR *HIM*, IT AIN'T! AND NOT FOR THE OTHER MUTANTS THAT THE NULL GROUP STILL HAS LOCKED AWAY IN THAT RAIL YARD.

YOU DON'T LIKE MY TACTICS? TOUGH.

BECAUSE I'LL SAY ANYTHING, DO ANYTHING, *SACRIFICE* ANYTHING, TO MAKE SURE THAT NO MUTANT *EVER* HAS TO GO THROUGH THAT AGAIN.

I'M NOT SAYING WE SHOULDN'T HELP THEM. BUT WE HAVE TO DO IT THE RIGHT WAY. OTHERWISE WE'RE NO BETTER THAN THE PEOPLE WHO—

ENOUGH!

JUST BECAUSE YOU AIN'T AN IMBECILE ANYMORE, THAT DON'T MEAN YOU KNOW *EVERYTHING*.

MUTANIMALS! GATHER UP.

WE'VE GOT A *TRAIN* TO CATCH!

LISTEN, MUTAGEN MAN. YOU DON'T NEED TO COME ALONG WITH US.

IF YOU AIN'T READY FOR THIS KIND OF FIELD WORK, NO ONE'S GONNA JUDGE YOU.

I HEARD WHAT YOU SAID IN THERE. AND YOU'RE RIGHT. IT'S NOT OVER.

THE SCIENTISTS KEPT ME IN ISOLATION. I NEVER MET ANY OF THE OTHER MUTANTS THEY HAD. BUT IF THEY'RE OUT THERE, I WANT TO HELP THEM. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I CAN DO. BUT I WANT TO DO *SOMETHING*.

OH, AND MY NAME ISN'T MUTAGEN MAN, SIR.

IT'S SEYMOUR. *SEYMOUR GUTZ*.

UHM... OKAY?

RAIL YARD.

ALL RIGHT... WE'LL STAY TOGETHER UNTIL WE FIND THE MUTANTS. LET'S ALL WATCH EACH OTHER'S BACKS, AND—

BLAM

WE'RE UNDER ATTACK! SOMEONE IS SHOOTING OUT OUR TIRES!

OR IT COULD BE FIREWORKS!

IT AIN'T FIREWORKS, PETE.

I KNEW WE WEREN'T PROPERLY PREPARED FOR THIS MISSION.

NOT THE DAMNED TIME, SLASH!

THIS WAY!

NULL SECURITY FORCES, HOLD YOUR FIRE!

SIR! I BELIEVE WE'VE BEEN LED INTO A TRAP, SIR.

WHAT A CLEVER CRUSTACEAN YOU HAVE THERE.

OH, NO. IT'S HER. IT'S *NULL!*

YES, IT'S ME, MUTAGEN MAN.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR COMING BACK TO US. AND FOR BRINGING ALONG THESE MIGHTY MUTANTS WHO HAVE BEEN CAUSING ME SO MUCH TROUBLE.

IF I CAN OFFER A PROFESSIONAL TIP?

THE NEXT TIME YOU TORTURE A SCIENTIST FOR INFORMATION, MAKE SURE YOU ASK HIM TO KEEP IT A SECRET.

I WAS WRONG. THERE'S *NOTHING* I CAN DO TO HELP.

NOW THEY'RE GOING TO TAKE ME BACK. THEY'RE GOING TO TAKE ME BACK TO THE LAB.

NO...

...THEY *AIN'T.*

BLAM

BLAM BLAM BLAM.

HUH. I GOTTA ADMIT, I KIND OF EXPECTED MORE OF A REACTION FROM YOU FELLAS.

WHAT WITH KILLIN' YOUR BOSS AND ALL.

WRONG, YOU STUPID CAT. YOU CAN'T KILL ME.

BUT THAT HURT LIKE HELL.

TAKE THEM!

NEUTRALIZE THE CRAB, FIRST!

NULL SECURITY

SIR, I'M BLIND, SIR!

I *CANNOT* PROVIDE ARTILLERY SUPPORT!

GET TO SAFETY, HERMAN! WE CAN—

WHOOSH!

HOB!

PLEASE... PLEASE MAKE THIS STOP. PLEASE MAKE THIS...

YOU CAN KEEP IT COMING, BUT WE'RE NEVER GOING TO STOP FIGHTING!

NO, SLASH! IF YOU CAN RUN... *RUN!*

SOMEONE NEEDS TO ESCAPE.

SOMEONE NEEDS TO RESCUE US...

"... AND THE OTHERS."

NRA 505

WHAT'S GOING ON OUT THERE?

A CONFLAGRATION OF SOME SORT, SALLY.

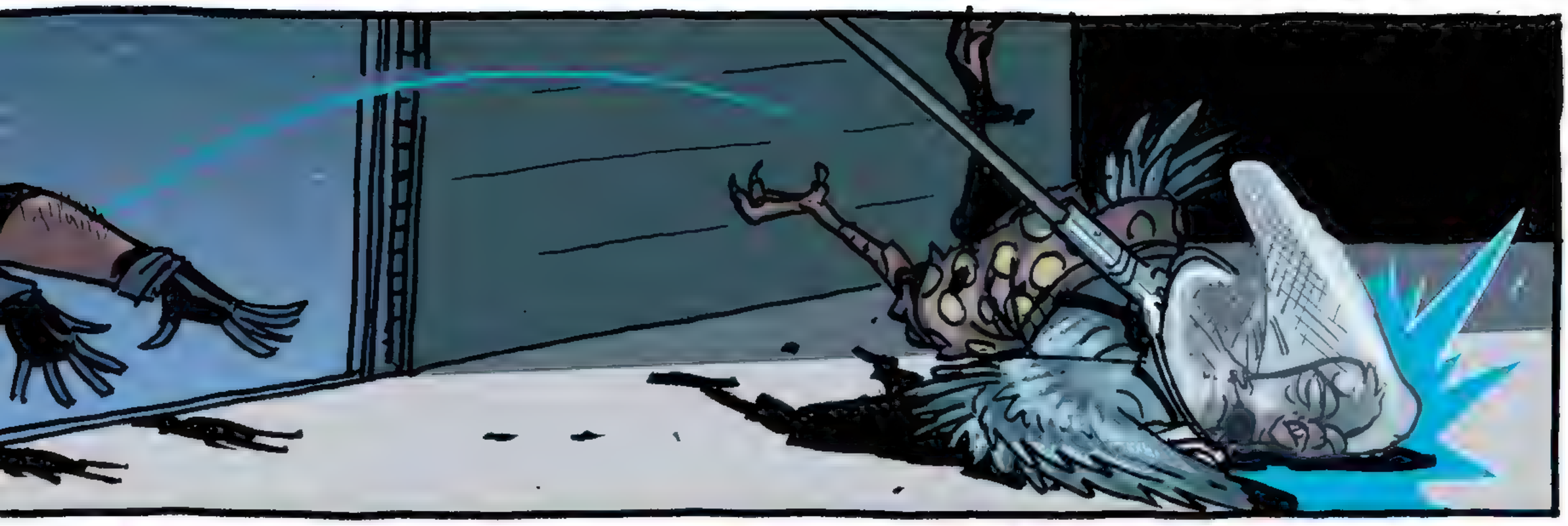
YEAH, RAY... I FIGURED THAT MUCH OUT ON MY OWN.

IF SOMEONE'S FIGHTING NULL, SHOULDN'T WE BE TRYING TO HELP THEM OUT? THE ENEMY OF OUR ENEMY, AND ALL THAT?

HOW? WE'RE IN A *CAGE*, SALLY.

WE DO WHAT WE ALWAYS DO. WAIT. STRATEGIZE. STRIKE WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT.

BUT WE NEVER GET TO THAT LAST PART, DO WE?



MUTANTS.

MONDO. I'M GLAD YOU MADE IT OUT.

WE NEED TO GET THEM BACK. HOB AND THE REST OF THEM.

HOW? THAT NULL LADY, SHE'S COMPLETELY CRAZY, BRO! SHE'S A CRAZY PERSON WITH AN *ARMY*.

AND WHAT ARE WE? JUST TWO DUDES. WE DON'T HAVE THE VAN. WE DON'T HAVE OUR TEAM. WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO, MAN? WHAT ARE WE GONNA *DO*?

WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO? WE'RE GONNA DO WHAT WE'RE *SUPPOSED* TO DO.

WE'RE GONNA BE GOOD GUYS. WE'RE GONNA BE HEROES.

WE'RE GONNA BE THE *MIGHTY MUTANIMALS!*

...OW.

art by BEN BATES

MUTANIMALS #3

art by ANDY KUHN
colors by NICK FILARDI

ALL RIGHT. I THINK I HAVE IT FIGURED OUT.

FIRST, WE'LL SECURE THE RAILROAD CAR. THEN WE'LL WORK TO UNDO THE COUPLINGS, AND SEPARATE IT FROM THE REST OF THE TRAIN.

NO CASUALTIES. MINIMAL VIOLENCE.

WE'RE *HEROES*.

AND WE'RE GOING TO *ACT* LIKE IT.

VRRRRRMMMMM

THAT WAS FAST! MONDO, WHERE DID YOU LEARN TO—

WE'RE *HEROES*, BIG MAN!

JUST FOCUS ON THAT PART.

RAY! ANOTHER ONE'S WAKING UP!

HEY THERE. I'VE GOT GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS.

THE GOOD NEWS IS... WE'RE HERE TO RESCUE YOU.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. I'M WORKING ON A RESCUE PLAN MYSELF.

I JUST NEED TO MAKE IT TO THE LOCOMOTIVE, AND THEN I CAN DRIVE US ALL RIGHT ON OUT OF HERE.

I MUST APOLOGIZE FOR MY FRIEND, *SALLY PRIDE*. THE SCIENTISTS RAN HER THROUGH DOZENS OF FLIGHT AND DRIVING SIMULATORS. TESTING MUTANT REFLEXES, AND LEARNING ABILITIES. NOW SHE THINKS SHE CAN DRIVE *ANYTHING*.

BUT YOU CAN'T DRIVE A *TRAIN* TO SAFETY, SALLY. IT'S ON A *TRACK*.

I CAN FIND A WAY.

MUTANIMALS! ARE THE REST OF YOU ALL RIGHT?

SIR, YES SIR. I DID A HEADCOUNT WHILE YOU WERE STILL UNCONSCIOUS. EVERYONE HERE IS INTACT AND UNHARMED.

WELL...

PHYSICALLY UNHARMED, SIR.

BETWEEN YOU AND ME, YOUR GUY OVER THERE IS RIGHT TO BE SCARED. THEY'RE TAKING HIM BACK TO THE LAB. BUT THEY'RE DONE TESTING RAY AND I.

THEY PLAN TO SELL US TO SOME CRIMINAL MASTERMIND. THE FOOT CLUB, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT. YOU'RE PROBABLY HEADED THERE, TOO.

THAT'S WHY YOU NEED TO HELP ME GET TO THE LOCOMOTIVE. THEN WE CAN—

...WE'RE TWO SHORT. WHERE ARE MONDO AND SLASH?

CURRENT WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN. BUT I BELIEVE THEY ESCAPED, SIR.

ESCAPED.

DON'T WORRY.

"WE'RE GONNA BE OKAY."

NJ RAIL

THIS IS THE ONE!

ALL RIGHT, SLASH. SO, LIKE, HOW DO WE GET FROM *HERE* TO *THERE*?

WE JUMP!

THAT'S... THAT'S A PRETTY BURLY JUMP, BRO. I DON'T SEE HOW—

—HEY! WHAT ARE YOU—

YEEEEAH!

SEE? PLENTY OF ROOM TO SPARE.

FWIP

SLASH.

MONDO.

GLAD YOU MADE IT TO THE DANCE.

WOULDN'T HAVE MISSED IT, HOB. AND LISTEN—

LATER. JUST GET US OUT OF HERE.

I DON'T WANT TO CAUSE UNDUE CONCERN, BUT— DOES ANYBODY ELSE HEAR FOOTSTEPS?

FWOOM

AHH!

YOU THINK A COUPLE OF GUARDS ARE ENOUGH TO BUST UP THE—

—OH... OKAY.

SLASH, WE MAY NEED TO DO A ONE-EIGHTY ON THAT "MINIMAL VIOLENCE" THING!

I THOUGHT WE WERE GOING FOR "MAXIMAL VIOLENCE!"

AAAAAAH!

HEY! COME CLOSER! COME CLOSER, YOU GUYS! THIS ISN'T A FAIR FIGHT!

PETE'S =GRRK= RIGHT! WE'LL TAKE ANY OF YOU DUDES, ONE ON ONE!

OR TWO ON ONE! I'D SETTLE FOR THAT!

MONDO!

GET HIM IN!

WE'RE ⇒NGH⇐ TRYING!

HE MUST WEIGH A TON!

IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO GO THIS WAY. WE'RE THE GOOD GUYS...

WE'RE...

NULL

RRRRRRRRGGGGH!

TAKE HIM DOWN! TAKE HIM DOWN!

WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK WE'RE TRYING TO—

NO MORE PAIN! NO MORE CAGE!

NO MORE!

AHH!

KRRSH

TNG

WHAM

STUPID HUMANS! NO MORE STUPID HUMANS!

PLEASE! PLEASE GOD, NO!

DUDE...

HHHRRRRGH!!

CRASH

NO HUMANS! NO PAIN! NO...

NO TIME...

...WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME. MONDO, WHY DON'T YOU—

WHOA! STAY BACK, SLASH. JUST *STAY BACK.*

WHAT'S WRONG?

WHAT'S *WRONG?* YOU WERE ACTING LIKE A MONSTER TWO SECONDS AGO, DUDE! DON'T YOU REMEMBER?

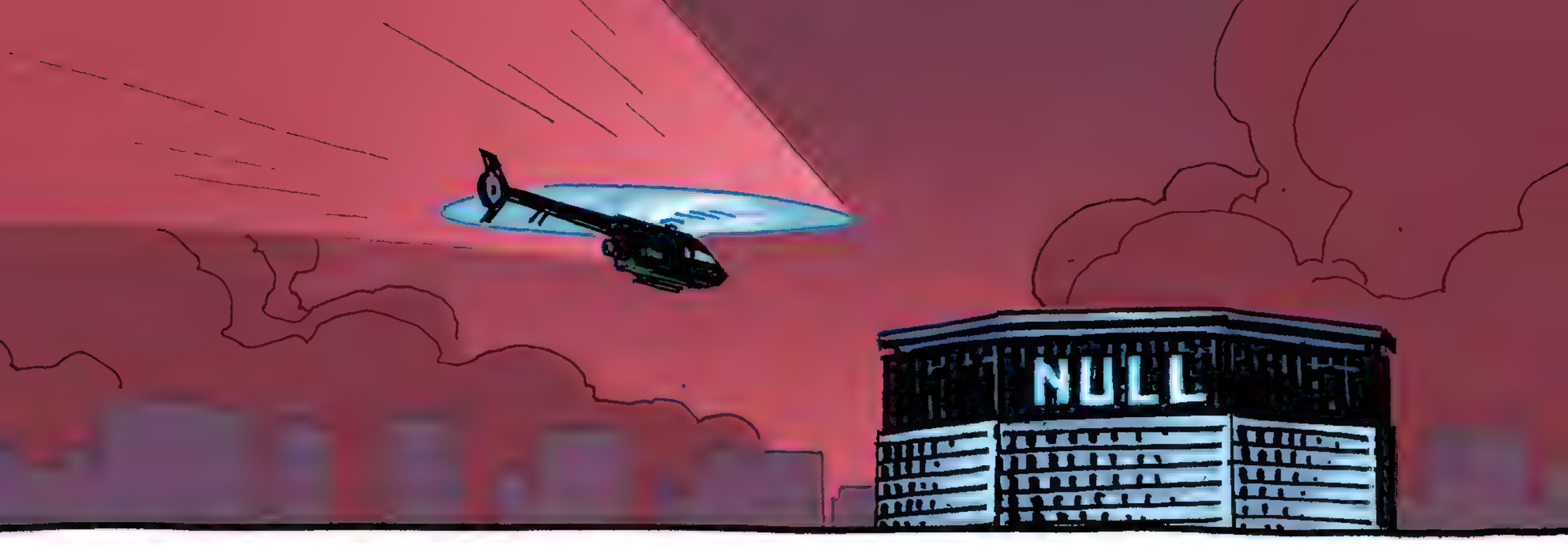
OF COURSE I DO. AND THERE'S NO CAUSE FOR ALARM. WE ALREADY KNEW THAT MY NEWFOUND INTELLIGENCE MIGHT BE *UNSTABLE.*

THE STRESS OF BATTLE *INCREASED* MY ADRENAL OUTPUT AND ALTERED MY PHYSIOLOGY.

BUT I'M FINE, NOW.

...

I'M FINE.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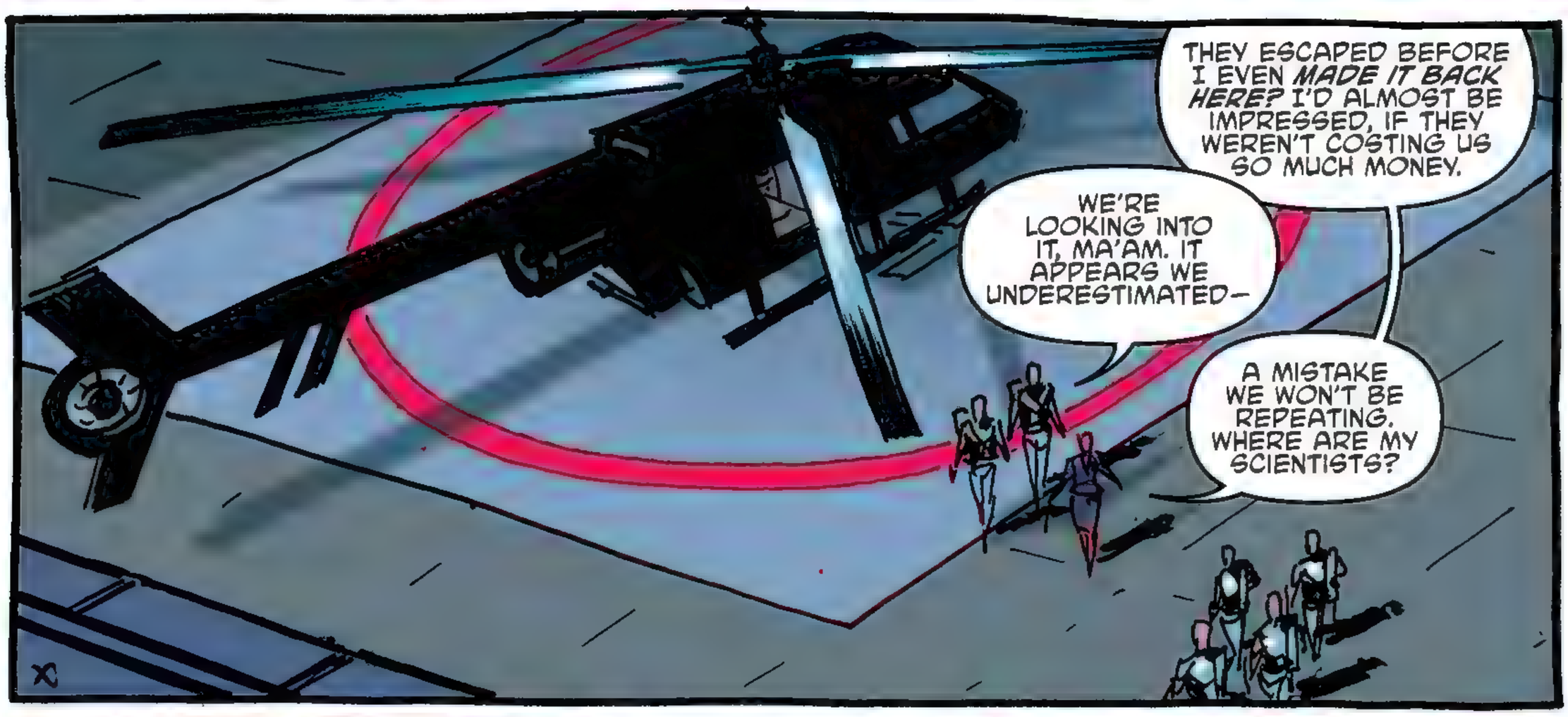

THEY ESCAPED BEFORE I EVEN *MADE IT BACK HERE?* I'D ALMOST BE IMPRESSED, IF THEY WEREN'T COSTING US SO MUCH MONEY.
WE'RE LOOKING INTO IT, MA'AM. IT APPEARS WE UNDERESTIMATED—
A MISTAKE WE WON'T BE REPEATING. WHERE ARE MY SCIENTISTS?

LIKE, RIGHT OVER HERE? MA'AM.
AS OF NOW WE OFFICIALLY HAVE NO REMAINING MUTANTS. BUT WE'RE NOT GOING TO BACK DOWN. WE'RE GOING TO *SPEED UP*.
I WANT OUR FIRST HYBRID PROTOTYPES BY THE NEXT FISCAL QUARTER. I WANT THEM ON THE MARKET BY—

MA'AM, I— I DON'T WANT TO BE A PART OF THIS. I'VE DECIDED.
LINDSEY, *DON'T.* I TOLD YOU—
AFTER HEARING MORE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIMENTS, ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE PLANNED... I'D LIKE TO THINK I HAVE A HEALTHY AMOUNT OF AMORALITY, BUT—

MY GOD, YOU HUMANS AND YOUR STUPID SENTIMENTALITY.

THIS TECHNOLOGY *EXISTS*. IT'S OUT THERE.

AND IF A TECHNOLOGY EXISTS, IT *WILL* BE CORRUPTED, AND IT *WILL* BE MONETIZED. DO YOU AGREE?

WELL...

OF COURSE YOU DO. AND IF THAT'S THE CASE— IF IT'S GOING TO HAPPEN, ANYWAY -- THEN IT MAKES NO SENSE TO LET SOMEONE *ELSE* DO IT.

WHATEVER ETHICAL PROBLEMS YOU HAVE, WHATEVER SINS YOU PERCEIVE, WILL STILL EXIST WITH OR WITHOUT YOUR INVOLVEMENT. THE ONLY QUESTION IS WHETHER YOU BENEFIT.

AND IF THAT DOESN'T SWAY YOU... THERE ARE SIXTY FLOORS BETWEEN US AND THE STREET.

DO YOU *REALLY* WANT TO ARGUE WITH ME RIGHT NOW?

WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, THIS ROUTINE OF YOURS WEARS THIN *VERY* QUICKLY.

ROUTINE?

YES. YOU LIKE TO INTIMIDATE PEOPLE. WITH YOUR HORNS AND YOUR RED SKIN, AND ALL THESE LITTLE HINTS THAT YOU'RE SOME GREAT EVIL. THE *DEVIL*. METAPHORICALLY SPEAKING.

BUT IT'S ALL BLUSTER. AND IT'S NOT GOING TO WORK ON ME.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, LINDSEY. YOU MIGHT ACTUALLY BE *USEFUL*, WITH THAT BIG BRAIN OF YOURS.

BUT EVEN WITH THAT BIG BRAIN, YOU STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION YOU'RE IN.

IF YOU TRY TO RUN... IF YOU TRY TO BETRAY ME... OR IF THE TIME COMES WHEN I DECIDE YOU'RE *NOT* USEFUL...

GO BACK TO THE LAB. WORK WITH JILLIAN.

TELL HER EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT MONSTERS AND MUTANTS.

TELL HER ALL YOUR DIRTY LITTLE SCIENTIFIC SECRETS.

OR I WILL CRACK YOUR HEAD OPEN AND PULL THEM OUT MYSELF.

METAPHORICALLY SPEAKING.

WHAT IN THE HELL DID YOU GET ME INTO? WHAT ARE WE—

SHUT UP.

JUST STOP THE ELEVATOR. DO IT NOW.

WHAT FLOOR? WHERE ARE WE GOING?

IT DOESN'T MATTER.

THEY HAVE, LIKE, SECURITY CAMERAS IN THE ELEVATORS. BUT NOT IN HERE.

LISTEN, I HAVE *NEVER* SEEN NULL DO ANYTHING LIKE THAT. I HAD NO IDEA WHAT—

STOP *LYING* TO ME, JILLIAN. FOR *THIRTY SECONDS*. OKAY? FOR THIRTY SECONDS, FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, JUST BE HONEST WITH ME.

YOU WANT HONESTY? OKAY.

BAXTER STOCKMAN MAY HAVE HAD CHET AND ALL THE REST OF THEM FOOLED, BUT YOU KNEW WHAT KIND OF MAN HE WAS.

BAXTER STOCKMAN NEVER KILLED ANYONE. AT LEAST NOT IN *FRONT* OF ME.

LIKE THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE?

TO *ME* IT DOES!

YOU GRABBED ME OFF THE STREET. TALKED TO ME ABOUT THE AMAZING LAB. THE UNLIMITED RESOURCES. THE *SCIENCE*.

YOU PLAYED ME. YOU KNEW *JUST* HOW TO PLAY ME. YOU ALWAYS DID.

I DIDN'T—

YOUR THIRTY SECONDS OF HONESTY AREN'T UP, JILLIAN.

FINE. YEAH, I PLAYED YOU. TOTALLY. BUT ONLY BECAUSE I *NEED* YOU!

DO YOU THINK I LIKE WORKING FOR *BEELZEBABE*? YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN THE ONE WHO KNOWS WHAT'S RIGHT, WHO CAN FIGURE THINGS OUT.

I THOUGHT ONCE YOU WERE IN, THEN TOGETHER WE COULD—

SO YOU DRAGGED ME INTO QUICKSAND, KNOWING THAT I WOULD BE FORCED TO HELP YOU GET OUT.

YEAH... MAYBE. BUT NOW WE'RE SINKING.

MA'AMS?

I'VE BEEN ASKED TO ESCORT YOU TO THE LOBBY.

AND THEN BACK TO YOUR LAB.

I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY MY FRIENDS... WHY EVERYONE REACTED THAT WAY.

BECAUSE THEY WERE *SCARED*, SLASH. SIMPLE AS THAT.

WHAT IF WE HADN'T BEEN BEHIND THOSE BARS?

THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE ONE OF US—MAYBE *ALL* OF US—WOULD'VE ENDED UP GETTING SHOVED THROUGH THE WALL OF THAT TRAIN CAR.

I'VE SEEN YOU SCRAPE IT UP AGAINST SOME MIGHTY BIG ODDS BEFORE.

BUT I AIN'T *NEVER* SEEN YOU LIKE THAT. LIKE YOU WERE OUT OF CONTROL.

OUT OF CONTROL. I... I WISH IT WAS THAT SIMPLE, HOB.

WHEN THEY WERE SHOVING THAT CAGE DOOR CLOSED, I FELT SOMETHING COME OVER ME. AND I TRIED TO FIGHT IT.

THEN I LOOKED AT ALL OF YOU, LOCKED IN YOUR CAGES... AND I LET GO. I *LET* MYSELF LOSE CONTROL.

I'M A MONSTER. ALL THAT TALK ABOUT HOW WE NEED TO BE BETTER THAN THE PEOPLE WE'RE FIGHTING. BUT IN THE END...

...I'M AS BAD AS THEM!

YOU LISTEN TO ME. I MAY NOT AGREE WITH YOU ABOUT HOW WE SHOULD BE FIGHTING THIS WAR. BUT DON'T YOU *DARE* SAY YOU'RE AS BAD AS THEM.

THAT AIN'T TRUE, BROTHER. AND IT NEVER WILL BE.

SO, AH, THAT ENDS THE TOUR! I'LL GO GET YOUR BEDS READY. AND IF YOU NEED ANYTHING ELSE, JUST ASK. I'M PETE! NOT SURE IF I MENTIONED THAT.

REPEATEDLY.

OH, AND TRY NOT TO POOP ON THE FLOOR. HOB STARTS TO GET PRETTY MAD AFTER THE FIFTH OR SIXTH TIME THAT HAPPENS.

THEY'RE GOING TO CREATE MORE. AREN'T THEY?

WHAT?

THEY'RE GOING TO CREATE MORE MUTANTS. TO REPLACE US.

AND THEY'LL GO THROUGH WHAT I—WHAT *WE* WENT THROUGH. ALL OVER AGAIN.

YES, SEYMOUR. I'M AFRAID THAT'S A LOGICAL ASSUMPTION.

SO WHY ARE WE SITTING AROUND HERE? WE NEED TO *DESTROY* THAT LAB.

AGREED.

BUT IT AIN'T LIKE WE CAN JUST WALTZ INTO THE PLACE.

WELL. ONE OF *US* COULD. ONE OF THEIR OLD LAB RATS.

THEY'D BE SO THRILLED TO HAVE US BACK, WE COULD WALK RIGHT IN THE FRONT DOOR.

WE JUST COULDN'T WALK BACK *OUT* AGAIN.

I'D LIKE TO OFFER WHAT MAY BE AN UNPOPULAR OPINION.

NOTHING NEW, THERE.

WE SHOULD *IGNORE* THE LAB. IF WE DESTROY IT, THEY'LL SIMPLY START THEIR WORK AGAIN IN A DIFFERENT FACILITY.

IF WE WANT TO CAUSE PERMANENT DAMAGE, WE HAVE TO GO HIGHER. WE HAVE TO GO AFTER NULL *HERSELF*.

I GET YOUR POINT. BUT THAT LADY AIN'T GOT A LOT OF WEAKNESSES. AT LEAST THAT I CAN SEE.

OF COURSE SHE DOES.

WHY WAS NULL AT THE TRAIN YARD? THE PLAN WOULD HAVE GONE JUST FINE WITHOUT HER.

BUT THE CEO OF A MULTINATIONAL ORGANIZATION TOOK THE TIME TO SHOW UP. *PERSONALLY.*

SO, SHE DON'T TRUST HER PEOPLE TO GET THE JOB DONE? THAT AIN'T EXACTLY A LOT TO GO ON.

SHE WASN'T THERE TO *MICROMANAGE*, HOB.

SHE WAS THERE BECAUSE FOR NULL, IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO WIN. SHE WANTS TO *WATCH YOU LOSE*.

SHE WANTS TO LOOK YOU IN THE EYE WHEN YOU KNOW YOU'VE BEEN BEAT.

YEAH... YEAH, WE CAN DEFINITELY USE THAT.

ALL RIGHT. SO WHAT'S THE GAME PLAN?

AND DO YOU NEED A *DRIVER?*

LET'S SEE... WHERE SHOULD IT GO, WHERE SHOULD IT GO...

PIGEON PETE? IS THAT YOU?

YEAH, IT'S ME! PETE!

WHAT ARE YOU... WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN MY ROOM?

I'M GIVING EVERYONE NIGHT LIGHTS!

SLASH GAVE ME ONE LAST WEEK, AND IT REALLY HELPS. YOU KNOW, WITH NIGHTMARES!

BUT, PETE—YOU'VE NEVER LIVED IN A LABORATORY, HAVE YOU? NEVER BEEN EXPERIMENTED ON?

NOPE! I'VE ALWAYS BEEN FREE AS A... WHATEVER.

THEN... THEN WHAT ARE YOUR NIGHTMARES ABOUT?

LOTS OF DIFFERENT THINGS.

TROLLEY CARS, MOSTLY. WEDDINGS. PRETTY MUCH ANYTHING THAT HAS TO DO WITH *RICE*.

OH.

MINE ARE DIFFERENT.

WHAT ABOUT, LIKE, A LASER? COULD YOU HOOK ME UP WITH ONE OF THEM?

ON YOUR *SKATEBOARD?* FOR WHAT PURPOSE? HOW WOULD THAT EVEN WORK?

BEATS ME. I JUST THINK LASERS ARE SICK AS HELL.

HEY, IS THAT...

HEY! SOLDIER! ARE YOU GOING AWOL?

SOLDIER!

WHERE THE HECK IS HE *GOING?* I MEAN...

"DUDE'S GOT NOWHERE *TO* GO. RIGHT?"

HE'S *DYING?* YOU'RE SURE THAT'S WHAT HE SAID? THIS IS, LIKE, SUPER IMPORTANT.

YES, MA'AM. HE SAID THAT HIS SUIT IS DAMAGED, AND IT'S *KILLING* HIM.

WOW, IT'S TRUE. YOU TOTALLY CAME BACK.

YES. I HAD TO COME HOME. AND FINISH MY WORK.

OUR WORK, MUTAGEN MAN.

MUTAGEN MAN? THIS IS—THIS IS THE HYBRID EXPERIMENT YOU WERE TELLING ME ABOUT? YOU MADE IT SOUND LIKE HE WAS PRACTICALLY *BRAIN-DEAD*.

YES! I KNOW! I LIED TO YOU A LOT! DO WE HAVE TO MAKE A BIG DEAL OUT OF IT, LIKE, *EVERY* TIME YOU DISCOVER A NEW LIE?

LET'S FIND OUT WHAT'S WRONG, MUTAGEN MAN. I JUST NEED TO TAKE A LOOK INSIDE YOUR—

PLANG!

GAAAH!

I DIDN'T... DIDN'T KNOW HOW MUCH THIS WOULD *HURT*. LIKE BEING FRIED ALIVE.

BUT DON'T WORRY. NO ONE KNOWS YOUR SUIT BETTER THAN ME. I JUST NEED TO EXAMINE—

NO! THAT'S *NOT* WHY I'M HERE.

MUTAGEN MAN, WHAT... WHAT DID YOU *DO*?

WHAT I HAD TO DO.

AND YOU'RE WRONG. NO ONE KNOWS THIS SUIT BETTER THAN *ME*. SO I FIXED UP MY WIRING. MADE A FEW CHANGES. AND NOW I'M OVERHEATING.

IN A FEW MORE MINUTES, I'M GOING TO EXPLODE.

AND THEN NONE OF YOU WILL *EVER* HURT ANOTHER MUTANT AGAIN.

art by BEN BATES

MUTANIMALS #4

art by ANDY KUHN
colors by NICK FILARDI

WHOOOOOO!

I TOLD YOU I COULD GET THIS BABY OFF THE GROUND!

YOU OWE ME TWENTY BUCKS!

NEITHER OF US HAVE A DIME OF CURRENCY TO OUR NAME, SALLY.

TAKE THIS NEXT LEFT. WE'RE ALMOST THERE.

YOU'RE SURE THIS IS WHERE SEYMOUR WENT?

YEAH...

I'M PRETTY SURE.

LISTEN—I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING. BUT THERE ARE INNOCENT PEOPLE IN THIS LAB.

YOU DON'T KNOW—

YOU DON'T KNOW! I KNOW MORE ABOUT THIS PLACE THAN YOU EVER WILL.

I KNOW THE PEOPLE WHO WORK HERE. I KNOW WHAT THEY'VE DONE.

AND I EVEN KNOW WHAT KIND OF CHEMICAL SPILL WILL TRIGGER A LOCKDOWN.

NO! WE'LL ALL BE TRAPPED!

DANGER CHEMICALS

NO!

THIS IS TOTALLY *BOGUS!*

HOB!

HEY, I'M JUST HERE TO GET MY MAN BACK, BEFORE HE DOES SOMETHING STUPID.

PUT DOWN THE GUN! HE'S OUR BEST CHANCE OF GETTING OUT OF THIS ALIVE.

WHICH MEANS WE'RE *REALLY* SCREWED.

HOB. YOU NEED TO LEAVE. PLEASE. *RIGHT NOW.*

NO WAY.

WHAT'S THE PLAN HERE, SEYMOUR? YOU GOT A BOMB SOMEWHERE ON YOUR SUIT?

HOB—

HE *IS* THE BOMB.

IT'S LIKE YOU SAID, HOB.

ANY SACRIFICE, TO MAKE SURE NO MUTANT—

NO! I DIDN'T MEAN...

SEYMOUR, THESE PEOPLE TRIED THEIR *DAMNEDEST* TO TURN YOU INTO A MONSTER. AND IF YOU DO THIS? THEY SUCCEEDED.

DO *NOT* LET THESE BASTARDS DEFINE YOU. YOU GET TO DECIDE WHO YOU WANT TO BE.

THAT'S WHAT SLASH WAS TRYING TO TELL ME.

AND HE WAS *RIGHT*.

SO, WHO DO YOU WANT TO BE, SEYMOUR?

I... I DON'T KNOW.

BUT I WANT TO... I WANT TO...

SEYMOUR! SEYMOUR, ARE YOU—

HE'S STILL ALIVE. THAT WASN'T THE BIG ONE!

BUT WE NEED TO DISARM HIM OR—

BOOOM

WHAT THE HELL?

SIR, WE HAVE BREACHED THE COMPOUND'S DEFENSES!

THE LOCKDOWN IS RUPTURED! EVERYBODY *RUN!*

NOT YOU, DR. AMANTE.

MUTANIMALS. YOU NEED TO RUN, TOO. GET OUT OF HERE, AND—

THAT'S *NOT* HAPPENING, BRO.

NO... I DIDN'T THINK SO.

I CAN'T FIGURE THIS OUT. IT'S YOUR TECH, JILLIAN. WHAT DO WE *DO*?

I—I DON'T KNOW. WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO...

RIGHT. NO TIME.

I'M SO SORRY IF THIS DOESN'T WORK.

KRAK! KRAK! KRAK!

SPUTTER...

CAN YOU TALK?

I... I CAN.

OKAY. LISTEN, MUTAGEN MAN.

WAIT. IS... IS MUTAGEN MAN REALLY WHAT YOU LIKE TO BE CALLED?

NO. I HAVE A *REAL* NAME, NOW. *SEYMOUR GUTZ.*

HUH. I'M GUESSING MONDO GECKO GAVE YOU THAT NAME.

LISTEN, SEYMOUR, YOUR SUIT NEEDS A LOT OF WORK. IT'S GOING TO TAKE TIME.

BUT YOU'LL BE OKAY.

HOB...

NO. DON'T GET SAPPY, OR TRY TO FEED ME SOME LINE ABOUT HOW WE'RE A FAMILY. I AIN'T BUYING IT.

WE'RE *NOT* FAMILY, HOB. BUT YOU NEED SOMEONE WHO KNOWS MUTAGEN.

I'LL BE THAT PERSON, UNTIL SOMETHING BETTER COMES ALONG.

FINE. WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER. BUT YOU'RE NOT COMING WITH US.

INSTEAD, I HAVE A *JOB* FOR YOU AND YOUR LITTLE FRIEND BACK THERE.

NULL

"YOU'RE BOTH GOING TO HELP US WITH THIS PLAN WE'RE COOKING UP..."

OLD HOB. I'M GLAD YOU CAME TO SEE ME. BECAUSE IF I CAN TELL YOU A LITTLE SECRET?

YOU GUYS ARE *REALLY* STARTING TO PISS ME OFF.

THAT'S THE IDEA.

YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T WIN. RIGHT? ABSOLUTELY, OBJECTIVELY CAN'T WIN.

WE'RE A MULTINATIONAL CORPORATION— *MULTI-DIMENSIONAL*, BETWEEN YOU AND I—AND YOU'RE A SCRAPPY BAND OF MUTANT TERRORISTS.

THE TRUTH IS, ALL OF YOUR EFFORTS HAVE MADE JUST THE TINIEST, MOST *IMPERCEPTIBLE* LITTLE DENT.

JUST A DENT, HUH?

IS THAT WHY I WAS ABLE TO WALK IN THE FRONT DOOR AND GET A MEETING? JUST YOU AND ME, ALONE IN YOUR OFFICE?

THEY'RE ALONE!

OKAY, SOLDIERS! IT'S GO TIME!

THERE'S GOING TO BE A LOT OF NULL GUARDS DOWN THERE, BUT WE'VE FACED THEM BEFORE.

WE'RE TRAINED. WE'RE READY...

"... AND WE KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT."

SIR... WE HAVEN'T SEEN A SINGLE PERSON SINCE WE LEFT THE ROOFTOP.

YOU KNOW WHAT LINDSEY SAID. NO CAMERAS IN THE STAIRWELLS. FAR LESS SECURITY GOING *DOWN* THAN COMING *UP*.

YES, SIR. BUT THERE *ARE* SECURITY CAMERAS OUT HERE. AND YET—

SMASH

YES. ALL THE GUARDS—THE *OTHER* GUARDS—RAN ONCE THE DOORS WERE OPEN. I GUESS THEY WEREN'T BEING PAID ENOUGH TO GET BLOWN UP?

NO, I— NO, I'M NOT QUESTIONING... YES. I'LL BE HERE.

WE HAVE ABOUT FIVE MINUTES BEFORE THE SECOND WAVE OF GUARDS ARRIVE.

I'VE WIPED THE DNA CODES. DELETED THE FORMULAS. SET THE RESEARCH BACK YEARS. BUT THIS NEXT THING—I REALLY DON'T THINK WE SHOULD—

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOU THINK, JILLIAN. THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO STOP RUNNING, AND STAY TOGETHER. WE CAN CONTINUE OUR WORK, WITH THE *MUTANIMALS*. HOB SAID HE WOULD TAKE BOTH OF US IN.

BUT FIRST, WE HAVE TO DO THIS. THOSE ARE THE TERMS. AND THEY'RE THE BEST YOU'RE GONNA GET.

THIS IS EVERYTHING ON OUR ANIMAL TESTING. EVERY FILE. EVERY VIDEO OF EVERY BRUTAL EXPERIMENT THAT NULL— THAT *I* PERFORMED.

THANK YOU, JILLIAN.

LINDSEY! LIKE, WHAT ARE YOU *DOING?*

WHAT DID YOU THINK, JILLIAN? THAT YOU WERE GOING TO GET A REWARD, JUST FOR FIXING YOUR OWN MISTAKES?

I'VE TRIED TO MAKE THIS WORK, JILLIAN. I'VE GIVEN YOU SO MANY CHANCES, AND YOU'VE BURNED ME EVERY TIME. SO CONSIDER THIS A PRE-EMPTIVE BREAK UP.

BUT, YOU SAID—

YOU'VE TOLD ME SO MANY LIES, I FIGURED I OWED YOU ONE.

LINDSEY, LISTEN—NO MORE LIES. NO MORE MANIPULATION.

I JUST WANT ALL THIS TO *STOP*. I'M SO TIRED OF SCRAMBLING JUST TO SURVIVE, LIKE—LIKE SOME *ANIMAL*.

GOODBYE, JILLIAN.

LINDSEY!

SOLDIERS! GET BEHIND ME!

THESE THINGS ARE *GNARLY!* AND, LIKE, NOT IN A *BODACIOUS* KIND OF WAY!

MONDO, SOMEDAY YOU'LL HAVE TO EXPLAIN TO ME THE INTRICACIES OF YOUR UNIQUE VERNACU—

GHAA!

PETE!

IT SOUNDS LIKE YOUR TEAMMATES HAVE ARRIVED.

LET ME GUESS: THE PLAN WAS FOR THEM TO SNEAK IN THE BUILDING, WHILE YOU DISTRACT ME?

WHAT A SURPRISE!

THE SECOND YOU ENTERED THIS OFFICE, WE STARTED TO EVACUATE THE BUILDING.

NOW IT'S JUST YOUR LITTLE CREW AND A DOZEN KILLER ROBOTS—ANOTHER ONE OF MY PET PROJECTS.

"DON'T YOU SEE, HOB?

"THIS ISN'T A SIEGE. THIS ISN'T THE NEXT BATTLE IN SOME ONGOING WAR.

"THIS IS THE END."

RRRARGH!

"AND THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT."

SEYMOUR!

HELP ME!

SOLDIERS... BROTHERS...

...IT'S BEEN A PRIVILEGE.

WHUP! WHUP! WHUP! WHUP!

MUTANIMALS! I HEARD YOU COULD USE A LITTLE HELP.

AND I THOUGHT, "HEY, WHY NOT? I'M JUST SITTING UP HERE IN THIS STOLEN HELICOPTER."

FLARE GUN

CRACK

NOW LET'S KICK SOME ROBOT ASS!

ENOUGH!

COME ON, HERMAN! WE COULD USE A BIT OF THAT FIREPOWER RIGHT ABOUT NOW.

YEAH, DUDE!

THAT'S MORE LIKE IT!

SLASH... ARE YOU...

IT'S... UNDER... CONTROL.

"NOW LET'S FINISH THE PLAN."

YOU KNOW, I ACTUALLY *LIKE* YOU, HOB. YOU'RE *INTERESTING*. SMART, BUT NOT EDUCATED. VIOLENT, BUT NOT TRAINED IN THE USE OF VIOLENCE. YOU HAVE SO MUCH POTENTIAL.

AND THAT'S MADE THIS PRETTY FUN. A PLEASANT DISTRACTION.

BUT WE'RE *DONE*, NOW.

YOU CAN'T WIN. AND YOU CERTAINLY CAN'T KILL ME. HONESTLY, I DON'T EVEN UNDERSTAND WHY YOU'RE *HERE*.

BECAUSE... I... CAN...

...*HURT* YOU.

AAAGH!

YOU STUPID ALLEY-CAT.

YOU MANAGED TO DISTRACT ME. BUT DID YOU REALLY THINK *THAT* WOULD *HURT* ME?

NO...

BUT *THIS* WILL.

FWOOM

SMASH

YOU... YOU CAN'T... YOU CAN'T WIN.

YOU'RE RIGHT. YOU'RE A GIANT, MULTINATIONAL CORPORATION. AND WE'RE JUST A SCRAPPY BAND OF MUTANTS. *WE CAN'T WIN.*

BUT BOY, CAN WE STIR UP TROUBLE. WAY MORE TROUBLE THAN WE'RE WORTH.

WE *WILL* MAKE SURE THAT THE PROFITS YOU EARN ARE NOWHERE NEAR WORTH THE COST.

"WE'LL SET YOUR RESEARCH BACK BY *YEARS*.

"WE'LL EXPOSE ALL YOUR DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS. WE'LL MAKE YOUR STOCK PRICES PLUMMET."

NEW

AND WHEN YOU FINALLY MANAGE TO CLAW YOUR WAY BACK TO WHERE YOU WERE?

WE'LL DO IT AGAIN.

SO PUT YOUR EFFORTS ELSEWHERE. CURE CANCER. SET UP A MINING COLONY ON VENUS. DEVELOP A NEW SPORTS DRINK.

OR A BLUEBERRY COLA!

OR A BLUEBERRY COLA.

DO WHATEVER YOU WANT. JUST LEAVE OUR KIND ALONE. BECAUSE IF YOU DON'T?

I WILL FIND YOU. I WILL HURT YOU. AND I SWEAR, I *WILL* KILL YOU.

EVEN IF I HAVE TO PUT YOU ON A ROCKET AND SHOOT YOU STRAIGHT INTO THE SUN.

LATER...

HEY, DON'T GO ANYWHERE, DOC! YOU'RE NEXT UP FOR SOME FIRST AID.

I WAS SITTING ON A PARK BENCH SIX BLOCKS AWAY FROM THE FIGHT, SALLY.

YEAH? SO WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR HANDS?

OH... THAT. THOSE ARE HEAT BLISTERS. SEYMOUR'S SUIT WAS... THE OVERHEATING WAS QUITE SIGNIFICANT.

AND BRAWLING WITH MY EX-GIRLFRIEND CERTAINLY DIDN'T HELP THE MATTER.

HUH. BUT YOU DIDN'T STOP. DIDN'T RUN. DIDN'T EVEN TELL US ABOUT IT.

I DIDN'T SEE THE *POINT*.

FIRST AID

I GET THAT. YOU DON'T LIKE TO ADMIT YOU NEED HELP. YOU FEEL LIKE IT MAKES YOU VULNERABLE. I'M THE SAME WAY.

I DON'T THINK THAT'S— YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE DYNAMIC THAT—

DOC. PETE TOLD ME WHY YOU LEFT THE TEAM.

THAT YOU DIDN'T FEEL LIKE ANYONE TRUSTED YOU.

BUT IF YOU WANT PEOPLE TO TRUST YOU, YOU'VE GOTTA TRUST *THEM*.

THAT'S THE POINT.

HOW'D IT GO?

WE NOW HAVE THE NAMES AND HOME ADDRESSES OF *EVERY* SCIENTIST WHO WORKED ON THE NULL GROUP'S MUTAGEN PROJECT.

WE SHOULD START MONITORING THEM. FIND OUT IF THE NULL GROUP DISMISSES THEM, OR RE-ASSIGNS THEM TO NEW PROJECTS.

AND IF THE MUTAGEN PROJECT STARTS UP AGAIN...

THEN WE STOP THEM, ANY WAY WE CAN. WE SHOW THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY THAT EXPERIMENTING ON MUTANTS IS...

...HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH.

AND YOU WOULD BE ALL RIGHT WITH THAT? I KNOW YOU INTELLECTUAL TYPES AREN'T EXACTLY SUITED TO—

I WOULD BE CONSIDERABLY *MORE* THAN ALL RIGHT WITH IT.

IN THE LAB—BEFORE YOU FREED ME—I HAD NOTHING TO DO BUT *THINK*. I SPENT ALL MY TIME PLANNING. ANALYZING. STRATEGIZING. BUT NEVER *ACTING*.

WHAT WE DID, AT NULL HEADQUARTERS ... I *NEEDED* THAT.

AND NOW I NEED MORE.

YEAH. IT'S A GOOD PLAN.

BUT WE ... WE PROBABLY SHOULDN'T TELL SLASH ABOUT IT.

OH, AGREED.

I THINK THAT OLD BOY HAS ENOUGH ON HIS MIND ALREADY.

OH, THERE YOU ARE, SIR.

YOU SHOULD DO THE HONORS.

NAH.

BEING WITH YOU ALL IS HONOR ENOUGH.

WELL, I KNOW *I'M* CERTAINLY HAPPY TO BE HERE. I SUSPECT THAT EVENTUALLY, THIS LITTLE TEAM WILL DO GREAT THINGS FOR MUTANTS EVERYWHERE.

EVENTUALLY? JEEZ, MAN. WHAT DO YOU CALL THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS?

I CALL IT A PRETTY GOOD START.

THE END.

art by BEN BATES

ISSUE #45

art by MATEUS SANTOLOUCO

WHERE...?

OH.

PLEASE, STAY AWHILE AND *VISIT* WITH ME...

...MY SON.

"DONATELLO, I HAVE RETURNED..."

BOOM

...AND I HAVE EXCELLENT NEWS!

GENERAL KRANG HAS BEEN SECURELY DELIVERED TO DIMENSION X. HIS THREAT TO EARTH IS GONE. YOUR PLAN WORKED, MY...

...FRIEND.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED HERE?

THE BASTARDS *KILLED* HIM...

...KILLED *DONNIE*.

MY PRECIOUS SON.

BY THE CREATOR...

...HE'S NOT DEAD!

STILL... ALIVE?

BARELY. MY SENSORS ARE PICKING UP A PULSE, BUT IT'S WEAK AND RAPIDLY FADING.

DOES THE LABORATORY HAVE A COOLING UNIT?

UM... YEAH... A BIG *WALK-IN* ONE IN THE BACK.

IT'S WHERE HAROLD KEEPS SOME OF THE BIGGER SERVERS.

GOOD. LEONARDO, GATHER YOUR BROTHERS AND VERY CAREFULLY MOVE DONATELLO THERE.

WHAT... WHAT FOR?

NO TIME FOR EXPLANATIONS— IF I'M RIGHT, WE HAVE LITTLE TIME. WE ALL NEED TO MOVE QUICKLY.

HOLD ON—WE'RE GONNA *FREEZE* DONNIE?

WHAT'S GOIN' ON, FUGITOID?

WHAT'S GOING ON IS WE NEED TO SLOW DOWN DONATELLO'S CELL METABOLISM.

BUT THAT WON'T HAPPEN IF WE DON'T ACT IMMEDIATELY!

COME ON, EVERYONE— YOU *HEARD* HIM. WE GOTTA HURRY.

THE UNIT'S THIS WAY.

WAIT...

...*WHERE* ARE THEY TAKING DONATELLO?

YOU ARE HAROLD LILLJA, CORRECT?

YES, THAT'S ME. WHA... WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

MY NAME IS HONEYCUTT, HAROLD, AND I NEED YOUR HELP. NOW.

WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU *TALKING* ABOUT?

IF WE ARE TO HAVE ANY CHANCE OF REVIVING DONATELLO, I REQUIRE CRITICAL ITEMS FROM BURNOW ISLAND.

I'LL NEED YOU TO TELEPORT ME THERE SO I CAN RETRIEVE THEM.

REVIVING DONATELLO? BUT I THOUGHT...

HE WAS DEAD? NO...

...NOT YET.

INSANITY. SHEER INSANITY.

STILL ALIVE.

"DONATELLO, MY SON..."

...IT'S YOUR FATHER.

I *KNOW* YOU STILL LIVE.

I'VE COME TO *FIND* YOU.

TO BRING YOU *HOME*.

"I'M TELLIN' YA, HE *AIN'T* HERE."

WE AIN'T SEEIN' *HUN* NOWHERE.

YEAH—AND WE LOOKED *EVERYWHERE.*

KEEP SEARCHING! *FIND HIM!*

I WILL NEED TO INFORM THE MASTER WHETHER HUN'S BEEN *DESTROYED* OR *DESERTED* UPON HIS RETURN.

NO, KARAI...

...YOU *WON'T.*

WHAT... WHAT ARE YOU *SAYING?*

WHERE IS MASTER SHREDDER?!

IT WAS AN *AMBUSH.* GENERAL KRANG'S FORCES WERE WAITING FOR US WHEN WE ARRIVED.

WE DID OUR BEST TO FIGHT THEM OFF, BUT KRANG USED SOME KIND OF *WEAPON* AGAINST US.

WE *TRIED* TO SAVE THE MASTER BUT THE WEAPON... IT WAS TOO POWERFUL.

AMBUSHED?

YES. THE TURTLE CALLED DONATELLO *BETRAYED* OUR MASTER AND WE...

...WE *FAILED* TO PROTECT HIM.

AND WHAT OF GENERAL KRANG?

WE DON'T KNOW. WE RETREATED AS SOON AS WE KNEW WE COULDN'T RESCUE MASTER AND BY THEN KRANG HAD *ALREADY LEFT* THE BATTLE.

WE FLED AS HE LAY DYING. WE HAVE *DISHONORED* THE CLAN.

ENOUGH!

I WILL HAVE *NO MORE* OF YOUR DAMNED WALLOWING.

HEAR ME NOW, *ALL* OF YOU!

UNTIL PROVEN OTHERWISE, WE MUST ASSUME MASTER SHREDDER IS *DEAD.*

I WILL CONFER WITH *KITSUNE* AS SHE HAS SOME... *EXPERIENCE* IN THESE MATTERS.

IN THE MEANTIME, WE WILL *REGROUP* OUR REMAINING FORCES AND DECIDE WHO IS WORTHY TO *REMAIN* WITH US.

WE HAVE PAID A HEAVY PRICE BY TRUSTING *OUTSIDERS* AND THE TIME HAS COME TO *CULL* OUR RANKS OF TRAITORS AND COWARDS.

MY GRANDFATHER MAY BE GONE, BUT KNOW *THIS*—

—THE FOOT CLAN IS *NOT.*

LIQUOR STORE
CONVENIENCE

<FASTER!>

<BUT WE LEFT THE *GROCERIES* INSIDE.>

<*JUST GO!* WE DON'T WANT TROUBLE.>

THAT'S RIGHT! *RUN!*

AND SPREAD THE WORD. THE *PURPLE DRAGONS* ARE BACK!

HELLS YEAH, WE ARE!

THIS 'HOOD BELONGS TO *US*, SUCKERS!

SAAHH!

WHA—

YO, DIDN'T YOU CHUMPS GET THE MEMO?

THIS *AIN'T* PURPLE DRAGON TURF NO MORE!

GUHH!

JONES?

WHOMP

WHAP

BLAM

MALO... CHUN... THE *HELL'S* GOIN' ON OUT HERE?

CHOK

WHICH MEANS YOU BOYS ARE *TRESPASSIN'*!

HUH?

OH, HEY, LINK.

WHA?!

I WAS JUST TELLIN' YOUR BOYS...

WHP

RARGG!

CHNK

...YOU 'BANGERS *AIN'T WELCOME* 'ROUND HERE.

KRAK

TIME FOR YOU GOONS TO GET LOST.

OH, WOW...

...YOU BEAT THEM *ALL.*

THANKS. I'M *ARUNE*.

CASEY. AND NO BIGGIE, DUDE. JUST *HELPIN' OUT* A NEIGHBOR.

THIS... THIS AIN'T *DONE*, JONES. WE'LL BE BACK.

GOOD, 'CAUSE I'LL BE HERE TO KNOCK THE *REST* OF YOUR TEETH OUTTA YOUR MELON.

UM... SHOULD YOU *ANTAGONIZE* THEM LIKE THAT?

BUT THIS IS *YOURS*. I CAN'T—

THESE JERKS WON'T STOP UNTIL SOMEONE *STANDS UP* TO 'EM. THEY TALK BIG BUT I'LL BET THEY THINK *TWICE* 'FORE MESSIN' WITH YOU AGAIN.

STILL... TAKE THIS. JUST IN CASE I CAN'T GET HERE *RIGHT AWAY* NEXT TIME.

DON'T SWEAT IT, MAN.

I GOT *PLENTY MORE* WHERE THAT CAME FROM.

SEE YOU 'ROUND, ARUNE. AND DON'T FORGET—THIS IS *OUR* NEIGHBORHOOD. SPREAD THE WORD.

OKAY... I WILL.

OH... AND BE CAREFUL. THERE WAS *ANOTHER ONE* WITH THEM—A REALLY BIG SCARY-LOOKING GUY.

BIG SCARY-LOOKIN' GUY?

OH...

...HELL NO.

"HOW DID *YOU* GET HERE?"

BETTER YET, HOW'D *I* GET HERE, MOTHER?

LAST THING I REMEMBER WAS FIGHTING BEBOP AND ROCKSTEADY IN HAROLD'S LAB, AND THEN...

OH, PRECOCIOUS CHILD—ALWAYS SEEKING *IMPOSSIBLE* ANSWERS.

IMPOSSIBLE? SO... THIS GARDEN *ISN'T* REAL? I'M DREAMING?

DID I SAY THAT, MY SON?

NO. NOT EXACTLY.

AND THAT LIGHT?

BEAUTIFUL, IS IT NOT?

YES. VERY.

I'VE NEVER SEEN *ANYTHING* LIKE IT. I KNOW I SHOULD BE FREAKING OUT RIGHT NOW—I MEAN, THIS JUST DOESN'T SEEM *LOGICAL* AT ALL. BUT...

...BUT THIS ALL FEELS *RIGHT* SOMEHOW.

WHERE EXACTLY *AM* I, MOTHER?

PERHAPS THE MORE *APPROPRIATE* QUESTION WOULD BE...

"...WHERE ARE YOU *GOING?*"

I'M HAVING A HARD TIME *BUYING* THIS, HONEYCUTT.

FRANKLY, THE SCIENCE SEEMS FAR-FETCHED. ARE YOU *CERTAIN* THIS WORKS?

YES, I AM. THOUGH, ADMITTEDLY, I DO HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT SLAP-DASHING THE COMPONENTS TOGETHER THE WAY WE HAVE, BUT TIME IS MOST DEFINITELY OF THE ESSENCE.

OKAY, LET'S SEE...

...WOULD YOU HAND ME THAT BLUE CABLE, PLEASE?

HERE. AND IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I CAN DO?

I FEEL BLASTED *USELESS* RIGHT NOW.

YOU UNDERESTIMATE YOUR VALUE, HAROLD. NOW AND—IF WE'RE SUCCESSFUL TODAY—LATER.

REVITALIZATION IS ONLY THE BEGINNING OF THIS PROCESS.

I HOPE YOU'RE *RIGHT*, HONEYCUTT.

PLEASE BE RIGHT.

I'M SORRY, BUT YOU'LL NEED TO MOVE AWAY FROM THE TABLE A BIT...

...IT'S TIME.

CLICK

"DO YOU THINK THEY'RE *TOO LATE?*"

IT'S BEEN LIKE, WHAT? *TWO HOURS* NOW?

PLEASE, GOD, PLEASE...

WE'RE GONNA JUST HAVE TO COUNT ON FUGITOID'S TECHNOLOGY.

I MEAN, WE'VE SEEN HIM DO SOME PRETTY *MIRACULOUS* STUFF ALREADY, SO MAYBE...

MAYBE *NOTHIN'!*

YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO THAT THIS *AIN'T* GONNA WORK, LEO.

I DON'T KNOW *ANYTHING*, RAPH.

AND NEITHER DO *YOU.*

YEAH, I DO. I KNOW THIS IS ALL *OUR* FAULT!

COME ON, RAPH—NOW'S NOT THE TIME TO LOSE IT.

NOW'S *EXACTLY* THE TIME, DAMMIT!

WE SCREWED UP—*ALL OF US!* FATHER WAS RIGHT... WE SHOULDA TAKEN CARE OF *SHREDDER* FIRST. BUT, NO—WE HELPED THAT *DAMN ROBOT* WITH HIS STUPID TECHNODROME INSTEAD. AND WHAT HAPPENED?

KRANG'S STILL ALIVE, WE DON'T KNOW WHERE THE HELL SHREDDER IS, AND OUR BROTHER'S *DYIN'*, THAT'S WHAT!

WE SHOULDA LISTENED TO FATHER. WE SHOULDA—

SHUT UP, RAPH!

JUST SHUT UP! WE SAVED THE WORLD!

DONNIE'D BE *HAPPY* IF HE WAS AWAKE—HAPPY WE STOPPED THE TECHNODROME... *JUST LIKE HE WANTED!*

SO, PLEASE, JUST *SHUT UP!* YOU COMPLAIN AND COMPLAIN ABOUT WHAT WE *COULDA* DONE BETTER...

...AND YOU'RE ONLY MAKIN' IT *WORSE!*

RAHH!

DON'T GET TOO ANGRY WITH HIM.

HE'S JUST *UPSET* ABOUT YOUR BROTHER.

WE *ALL* ARE, ALOPEX.

I KNOW, LEO. RAPH JUST TENDS TO SHOW IT A LITTLE MORE... *LOUDLY* THAN THE REST OF US.

I'LL GO MAKE SURE HE'S OKAY.

WHAM

HE'S RIGHT.

WHAT?

RAPH'S RIGHT—WE MAY HAVE STOPPED KRANG BUT WE HAVE *NO CLUE* WHAT'S UP WITH SHREDDER.

NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS TODAY, *THAT'S* SOMETHING WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO DEAL WITH.

AND I *PROMISE* YOU, WE WILL.

ALL I CAN SAY IS, IF SHREDDER *IS* STILL ALIVE...

"...HE'S GONNA *WISH* HE WASN'T."

AH, YES...

...HOME SWEET HOME.

I'LL *DRINK* TO THAT.

GUH!

WHERE HAVE YOU TAKEN ME?

AHH... *THERE* YOU ARE.

THAT WAS QUITE THE NAP, SHREDDER. SLEEPING LIKE THE *DEAD*, DARE I SAY?

YOU HAD ME A BIT *WORRIED* THERE FOR A BIT.

I COULD KILL YOU NOW, SCIENTIST. *ANSWER* MY QUESTION.

TSK, TSK. BARELY AWAKE AND *ALREADY* BARKING ORDERS.

AND AFTER I WAS NICE ENOUGH TO ALLOW YOU TO SLEEP IN *MY OWN* BED.

NOT VERY *GRACIOUS* OF YOU, I MUST SAY.

LISTEN, FOOL, I—

NO.

YOU LISTEN.

THIS IS MY HOME AND I AM *NOT* ONE OF YOUR SNIVELING MINIONS, NINJA.

YOU ARE *ONLY* ALIVE RIGHT NOW BECAUSE I SEEK TO CONDUCT *BUSINESS* WITH YOU.

SOMETHING YOU SEEMED TO BE IN *FULL AGREEMENT* WITH WHEN I WAS SAVING YOUR SKIN FROM *CERTAIN* DEATH.

IF I'M TO REESTABLISH MYSELF IN THIS TOWN, I'LL REQUIRE THE KIND OF *CAPITAL* YOU HAVE AT YOUR DISPOSAL.

COMBINING MY *EXPERTISE* WITH YOUR *WEALTH* FOR FUN AND PROFIT, SO TO SPEAK.

IF, HOWEVER, YOU'VE *CHANGED* YOUR MIND ABOUT OUR PARTNERSHIP...

...THEN I'M SURE MY *FRIENDS* HERE WILL HAVE NO PROBLEM SEEING YOU OUT.

I MUST WARN YOU, THOUGH, THIS IS THE *PENTHOUSE SUITE* AND YOU WON'T BE LEAVING VIA THE ELEVATOR OR STAIRS.

INDEED.

VERY WELL, I WILL *DISCUSS* THIS PARTNERSHIP WITH YOU.

AND IF IT MEETS WITH MY SATISFACTION, I WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH *ALL* THE RESOURCES YOU REQUIRE—MONEY, EQUIPMENT, SECURITY.

BUT ON *ONE* CONDITION.

WHICH IS?

OUR *FIRST* ORDER OF BUSINESS...

"...IS TO FIND AND DESTROY THE *RAT* AND HIS INFERNAL BROOD."

"WHAT DO YOU *MEAN*... WHERE AM I GOING?"

I MEAN, CHILD, IT IS *YOUR* CHOICE WHICH PATH YOU NEXT FOLLOW— INTO THE LIGHT OR THE DARK.

PLEASE, WALK WITH ME, MY SON...

"...PERHAPS I CAN HELP YOU *FIND* YOUR WAY."

I AM COMING, MY SON.

LOOK AT THIS CHERRY TREE. SUCH GRAND SPLENDOR AND YET THE BEAUTY WE ARE WITNESS TO IS ONLY A *PORTION* OF THE FULL WONDER.

WE BEHOLD THE STURDY TRUNK WITH ITS MANY GRACEFUL BRANCHES AND THEIR *ABUNDANCE* OF SWEET-SMELLING BLOOMS.

"BUT UNDERNEATH IT ALL, *INVISIBLE* TO OUR EYES, ARE THE MIGHTY ROOTS THAT ARE THE *TRUE* FOUNDATION FOR THE BEAUTY ABOVE."

I WILL *NOT* GIVE UP!

IT IS A MYSTERIOUS *BALANCING* ACT, ABOVE AND BELOW—THE SEEN AND THE UNSEEN. JUST LIKE THE DARK AND LIGHT, ONE DOES NOT EXIST *WITHOUT* THE OTHER.

YES, THERE IS *CONSOLATION* TO BE FOUND IN THE WARM LIGHT. BUT THERE IS ALSO *KNOWLEDGE* YET TO BE DISCOVERED IN THE UNCERTAIN DARK. KNOWLEDGE *YOU* SEEK.

AND YOU WILL NEVER BE ALONE, NO MATTER *WHICH* PATH YOU CHOOSE.

DONATELLO?

FATHER?

BUT...

...MOTHER?

YES, MY SON. I AM HERE.

IT IS TIME TO *RETURN* HOME.

PLEASE, MY SON...

...YOUR FAMILY *NEEDS* YOU.

I... I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. I THINK IT'S *WORKING*.

WHERE... WHERE AM I?

IT IS! DONATELLO, IS THAT YOU?!

OF COURSE IT IS, HAROLD. BUT WHY DO I FEEL SO...

...WEIRD

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?

eeeee

art by KEVIN EASTMAN
colors by RONDA PATTISON

FCBD

art by MATEUS SANTOLOUCO

MY NAME IS *HAMATO YOSHI.*

I AM ALSO CALLED *SPLINTER.*

IN TWO LIFETIMES, I HAVE BEEN A *NINJA MASTER* AND I HAVE BEEN A *FATHER.*

AS A NINJA, I HAVE WORKED DILIGENTLY TO *TRAIN* MY MIND AND MY BODY TO WITHSTAND AND OVERCOME A WARRIOR'S MANY TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS.

I HAVE STRIVED FOR *ABSOLUTE DISCIPLINE* THROUGH BOTH VICTORY AND DEFEAT.

BUT AS FOR FATHERHOOD, NO AMOUNT OF TRAINING...

...NO AMOUNT OF DISCIPLINE...

...COULD HAVE PREPARED ME FOR THE *UTTER JOY* IT HAS BROUGHT TO MY TWO LIFETIMES.

NOR THE *IMMEASURABLE PAIN.*

THROUGHOUT IT ALL, I HAVE ENDEAVORED TO MAINTAIN MY HONOR.

IN THE FACE OF EVIL, I HAVE *NEVER* COMPROMISED MY PRINCIPLES.

A DOGMATIC PURSUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT HAS CREATED AN *ETERNAL ENEMY.*

TAKEN MY *BELOVED WIFE.*

STOLEN MY *HOME.*

AND EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE SPARED FOR A TIME...

...MY UNYIELDING ADHERENCE TO STRICT IDEOLOGIES MADE INNOCENT VICTIMS OF MY *FOUR PRECIOUS SONS* AS WELL.

ALL MY BEST INTENTIONS TRANSFORMED INTO A NIGHTMARISH CURSE, AND I COULD ONLY PRAY THAT *JUSTICE* WOULD SOMEHOW, SOMEDAY BE SERVED.

AMAZINGLY, THE UNIVERSE *ANSWERED* MY PRAYERS, THOUGH IN A MOST MYSTERIOUS FASHION.

MY BEAUTIFUL SONS AND I HAD BEEN *RETURNED* FROM OUR UNTIMELY DEATHS...

...NEWLY FORMED AND TRAPPED IN A *FAR FUTURE* TIME AND PLACE.

BUT FATE AND DESTINY WOULD *NOT* BE DENIED, AND WE SOON FOUND OURSELVES FREE AND METAMORPHOSED EVER CLOSER TO THE HUMANITY WE HAD LOST CENTURIES BEFORE.

YET ONCE MORE AT ODDS WITH THE *VERY SAME* IGNOBLE ENEMY FROM OUR ANCIENT HISTORY.

HAUNTED ECHOES OF THE PAST RESOUNDING AGAIN, AND DEFYING *ALL* LOGICAL EXPLANATION.

EXTRAORDINARY...

...BUT NO LESS DEADLY.

DONATELLO. MY SON. MY HERO.

HE VERY NEARLY *LOST* HIS LIFE SO OTHERS COULD LIVE ON. NOT JUST HIS FAMILY...

...BUT THE *ENTIRE* WORLD.

AND NOW HE EXISTS *BETWEEN* TWO WORLDS.

HIS *BROKEN BODY* CONFINED TO THIS BED.

HIS *INDOMITABLE SOUL* TRAPPED WITHIN A MACHINE.

HE HAS GIVEN SO MUCH TO THIS WAR. SO AS HIS FAMILY—AS HIS FELLOW WARRIORS—WE WILL *HONOR* HIS SACRIFICE.

AS WE CARE FOR THE FALLEN...

"...AND AS WE CONTINUE TO FIGHT."

HEY, GUYS, NO SIGN OF THE *MUTANIMALS* ANYWHERE...

...AND I LOOKED HIGH AND LOW, TRUST ME.

GOTTA GO PRETTY STINKIN' LOW IF YOU'RE LOOKIN' FOR *HOB* AND HIS CREW.

AT LEAST YOU TRIED, MIKEY. I HAVE MY DOUBTS THEY'D HELP US EVEN IF YOU *DID* FIND THEM...

"...SEEMS LIKE EVERYONE'S OUT FOR *THEMSELVES* NOW THAT SHREDDER'S OUT OF THE PICTURE."

LOOK AT THAT, WOULDJA?

PURPLE DRAGONS STRUTTIN' AROUND LIKE A BUNCHA CHICKENS WITH THEIR HEADS CUT OFF.

EXCEPT THEY DON'T SEEM TOO CHICKEN ABOUT GETTING CAUGHT. THEY'VE DEFINITELY GOTTEN MORE *RECKLESS* LATELY.

PROBABLY 'CAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE *HUN* BOSSIN' THEM AROUND SO MUCH ANYMORE.

DUMB THUGS CAN'T THINK FOR THEMSELVES.

DUMB FOR SURE, BUT BEING LEADERLESS MAKES THEM MORE UNPREDICTABLE AND DANGEROUS, TOO. "ALL WRONG-DOING ARISES BECAUSE OF MIND."

AT LEAST THAT'S HOW *SENSEI* PUTS IT.

WELL, HOWEVER YOU ZENHEADS SAY IT, ONE THING'S FOR SURE—

—RIGHT WHEN WE THINK WE GOT THINGS FIGURED OUT, THEY GO AND GET ALL *CRAZY* ON US AGAIN...

"... JUST LIKE ALWAYS."

"YEAH—IT SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY WHEN *THE FOOT* WERE JUST TRYIN' TO TAKE OVER THE STREETS...

"... BACK WHEN THOSE *SAVATE* DUDES WERE STILL AROUND."

"MAN, I THOUGHT THOSE FRENCH GUYS WERE TOUGH BUT *SHREDDER'S* GOONS TORE THROUGH 'EM LIKE NOTHIN'.

"'COURSE IT DIDN'T HURT HAVIN' *YOU* ON THEIR SIDE, LEO."

"NOT EXACTLY *MY* CHOICE."

"YEAH—LEO WAS *BRAINWASHED*, RAPH!"

"NO DUH, MIKEY."

"I'M JUST SAYIN', HAVIN' LEO AS THEIR ACE-IN-THE-HOLE GAVE 'EM A *HUGE* ADVANTAGE."

"I GUESS. I'M JUST GLAD YOU GUYS PULLED ME *OUT* OF THAT MESS."

"HEY, *NO WAY* WE WERE GONNA LET YOU DOWN, BIG BRO!"

"MIKEY'S RIGHT. WE'RE *FAMILY*—

"—IN THIS THING *TOGETHER* ALL THE WAY, NO MATTER WHAT."

"TOO BAD NOT ALL FAMILIES ARE AS TIGHT AS US—MIGHT BE A BETTER WORLD. I MEAN, JUST LOOK AT POOR *CASEY* AND HIS DAD."

"YEAH, HIS AND HUN'S RELATIONSHIP IS PRETTY DYSFUNCTIONAL."

"ONLY THING DYSFUNCTIONAL IN *THAT* RELATIONSHIP'S HUN'S PUNY BRAIN, LEO."

"MAYBE, RAPH. AT LEAST CASEY'S BEEN ABLE TO TURN HIS BACK ON THAT LIFE."

"*ANGEL*, TOO. THE STUFF SHE DOES AS *NOBODY* IS TOTALLY AMAZING!"

"...NEXT MINUTE SHE SHOWS UP OUTTA NOWHERE ASKIN' TO BE ON ANGEL'S TEAM. SOMETIMES THE WORLD GOES BONKERS IN *GOOD WAYS*, HUH?"

"WHAT ABOUT *ALOPEX*? ONE MINUTE SHE'S SHREDDER AND KARAI'S LITTLE LAPDOG...

"YOU JUST THINK IT'S GOOD 'CAUSE YOU GET TO HANG OUT WITH ALOPEX MORE. RAPH AND ALOPEX, SITTIN' IN TREE, K-I-S—"

"SHUT UP, MIKEY!"

"YEAH, WELL, IT WASN'T LIKE IT TOOK LONG FOR *KARAI* TO REPLACE ALOPEX."

"STINKIN' *BEBOP* AND *ROCKSTEADY*. I SWEAR, THEY'LL GET THEIRS IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO."

"DON'T FORGET THE *GOOD MUTANTS*, GUYS."

"IF YOU'RE TALKIN' 'BOUT *OLD HOB* AND HIS *MUTANIMALS*, MIKEY, I CAN THINK OF A LOTTA OTHER WORDS BESIDES 'GOOD' TO DESCRIBE 'EM."

"HEY, THEY'VE MADE SOME MISTAKES...

"...BUT YOU GOTTA ADMIT THEY'VE BEEN THERE FOR US WHEN WE'VE *NEEDED* 'EM, TOO.

"AND NOT JUST THEM. WE'D BE WAY WORSE OFF WITHOUT *APRIL*."

"YEAH, MIKE— I DON'T KNOW *WHERE* WE'D BE WITHOUT HER.

"HECK, THE SAME GOES FOR DONNIE'S SCIENCE PAL *HAROLD* FOR THAT MATTER."

"WHATEVER. I JUST WANT TO GET RID OF ALL THE YAHOOS IN OUR LIVES."

"WELL, AT LEAST WE CAN CHECK *GENERAL KRANG* AND *SHREDDER* OFF THAT LIST, RAPH.

"THOSE TWO HATING EACH OTHER'S GUTS HAS REALLY HELPED US STRATEGICALLY."

"IT'S JUST TOO BAD THEY DIDN'T WASTE EACH OTHER THE *FIRST TIME* THEY TANGLED.

"WOULDA SAVED US *A LOT* OF PROBLEMS."

"STILL, THAT SKIRMISH *DID* OPEN SOME TACTICAL DOORS FOR US, RAPH."

"DONNIE'S IDEA FOR USING *METALHEAD* TO GET TO SHREDDER WAS GENIUS.

"TALKING THE FOOT INTO ATTACKING KRANG'S ISLAND VIA THE *TELEPORTER* IN HAROLD'S LAB WAS A FANTASTIC PLAN."

"'CEPT THE PART ABOUT SHREDDER LEAVIN' *BEBOP* AND *ROCKSTEADY* BEHIND TO *GUARD* DONNIE."

"EVEN THE BEST PLANS GO OUT THE WINDOW ONCE THE FIGHTING STARTS, RAPH...

"...AND NOT *JUST* FOR US.

"SHREDDER'S PLOT WASN'T AS ROCK-SOLID AS *HE* FIGURED, EITHER."

"TRUE THAT. DIDN'T WORK OUT SO GOOD FOR HIM, *DID* IT?"

"LET'S *HOPE* SO, RAPH..."

"...BECAUSE AFTER WHAT THOSE *PSYCHOS* DID TO DONNIE..."

"...WE COULD *REALLY* USE SOME GOOD LUCK TO FALL OUR WAY."

"...DONNIE WOULDA BEEN A *TOTAL* GONER."

"YEAH, WELL, I GOTTA WONDER, MIKE, THE *WAY* DONNIE IS NOW..."

"C'MON, LEO—BAD AS IT WAS, THINGS COULDA BEEN *SO* MUCH WORSE.

"'LEAST WE HAD *FUGITOID* AND *HAROLD* ON OUR SIDE. WITHOUT THEM...

...MAYBE ALIVE'S NOT EXACTLY AN *ACCURATE* WAY OF PUTTIN' IT.

NO WAY, RAPH! DONNIE'S ALIVE! AND FUGITOID'S GONNA TOTALLY FIX HIM BACK TO *NORMAL*, YOU'LL SEE.

GOTTA AGREE WITH MIKEY. WHERE THERE'S LIFE, THERE'S HOPE.

YEAH, I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT. SPEAKIN' OF NOT BEIN' ALIVE, YOU *REALLY* THINK OL' SHREDHEAD KICKED THE BUCKET ON BURNOW ISLAND?

WELL, FUGITOID SAID THERE'S *NO WAY* ANY HUMAN COULD'VE SURVIVED THE TECHNODROME'S TERRAFORM RAY. BUT SHREDDER TENDS TO BE FULL OF SURPRISES, SO WHO KNOWS.

UH OH, GUYS— CHECK IT OUT...

...LOOKS LIKE THOSE 'BANGERS JUST WENT FROM STRUTTIN' AND SPRAY PAINTIN' TO CAR JACKIN'.

THEN MAYBE WE SHOULD GO DOWN THERE AND DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT, FELLAS.

YEAH— ISN'T THAT A LITTLE BIT UN-NINJA-LIKE, BRO? WE'LL BE EXPOSED.

WELL, SEEMS TO ME, THE WAY THE RULES KEEP CHANGING...

...IT MIGHT BE THE RIGHT TIME FOR *US* TO BREAK A FEW.

PINCH ME, MIKEY—I'M DREAMIN'.

YOU'RE NOT DREAMIN', BRO...

...YOU'RE JUST *WASTIN' TIME!*

BEST PATROL EVER!

NICE OF YOU TO *JOIN* US, RAPH.

YEAH, BRO— YOU'RE LAGGIN'!

I WAS TOO BUSY HAVIN' A HEART ATTACK FROM SHOCK.

IT AIN'T LIKE YOU TO PUNCH *FIRST* LIKE THIS, LEO.

NOT THAT I'M COMPLAININ'.

WELL, IF THE LAST FEW MONTHS HAVE TAUGHT ME ANYTHING...

...IT'S THAT SOMETIMES YOU GOTTA TAKE THINGS *HEAD ON!*

FWAP

WHAP

DON'T WORRY, LEO—WE WON'T TELL *FATHER* ON YOU.

I'M NOT WORRIED, MIKE.

AFTER EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED, I THINK MASTER SPLINTER WOULD APPROVE.

GRFF!

WELL, I KNOW *I* DO!

SO DO I...

UH OH.

...SAVES ME THE TROUBLE OF *HUNTIN'* YOU NASTY MUTANTS DOWN.

GREAT. HUN.

THOUGHT I SMELLED SOMETHIN' RANK.

THAT'S A PRETTY GOOD TRICK, TURTLE...

...FOR A GREEN FREAK WITH NO NOSE.

WELL... WHAT'RE WE *WAITIN'* FOR?

HEADS UP, GUYS!

NO, TURTLE...

...HEADS *OFF!*

WHOA!

FOR *CASEY*, YOU DEADBEAT SCUM!

YER RIGHT!

KRAK

UFF!

THIS *IS* FOR CASEY—ALL OF IT! YOU MONSTERS MADE HIM HATE ME.

NOW I'M GONNA MAKE YOU HATE...

...THAT YOU WERE EVER BORN!

HUN! KARAI SENT US TO FIND YOU...

OH... NO.

...SHE WANTS TO KNOW WHY YOU SKIPPED OUT ON HER WHEN THAT RAT AND HIS CREW ATTACKED.

SHE'S A LITTLE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR *LOYALTY* TO THE FOOT.

WAIT, *BLUDGEON*— WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE? THE TURTLES, TOO?

THE FILTHY HUMAN WILL HAVE TO WAIT—

—IT'S TIME FOR A REPTILE FEAST.

FORGET THIS!

HEH. I LIKE YOUR SENSE OF PRIORITY, *KOYA*.

UH, LEO, I'M ALL FOR BREAKIN' RULES AND STUFF, BUT I THINK WE'RE ABOUT TO GET OUR *SKULLS* BROKEN INSTEAD.

WE'VE GOT NO CHOICE.

WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO *FIGHT* OUR WAY OUT.

FINE BY ME!

AND BY US!

GUYS, LOOK OUT!

FWOOSH

WHAT THE—?

A WARNING SHOT, THAT'S WHAT.

MOVE EVEN A MILLIMETER AND THE NEXT ONE WON'T BE.

YES! *IT'S DONNIE!*

GET READY, FELLAS...

...BECAUSE WE ARE OUT OF HERE!

FWASH

THEY'RE GETTING AWAY.

FOR NOW. THEIR DAYS ARE NUMBERED— WE WILL AVENGE OUR MASTER YET.

UNTIL THEN...

"...LET THE COWARDS RUN."

TOO FAST! CAN'T ST—

SKKDDD

KRSSH

WHOA, DONNIE, ARE YOU OKAY?

I'M GOOD, LEO. STILL TRYING FIGURE OUT HOW TO USE THIS NEW BODY IS ALL.

IT'S A BIT COMPLICATED.

COMPLICATED? THEY'RE CALLED *BRAKES*, GENIUS.

SERIOUSLY, THOUGH, IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU KICKIN' BUTT AGAIN, MAN.

YEAH, ROBO-BRO. THAT WAS TOTALLY AWESOME!

DON'T MENTION IT, GUYS.

I'M JUST GLAD TO BE BACK IN THE FIGHT.

AND WE'RE GLAD TO *HAVE* YOU.

THAT WAS A CLOSE ONE... I SHOULD'VE KNOWN BETTER THAN TO LET MY EMOTIONS DICTATE MY TACTICS.

SO, WHAT NOW?

NOW WE *GO HOME*. I DON'T WANT TO PUSH OUR LUCK ANYMORE.

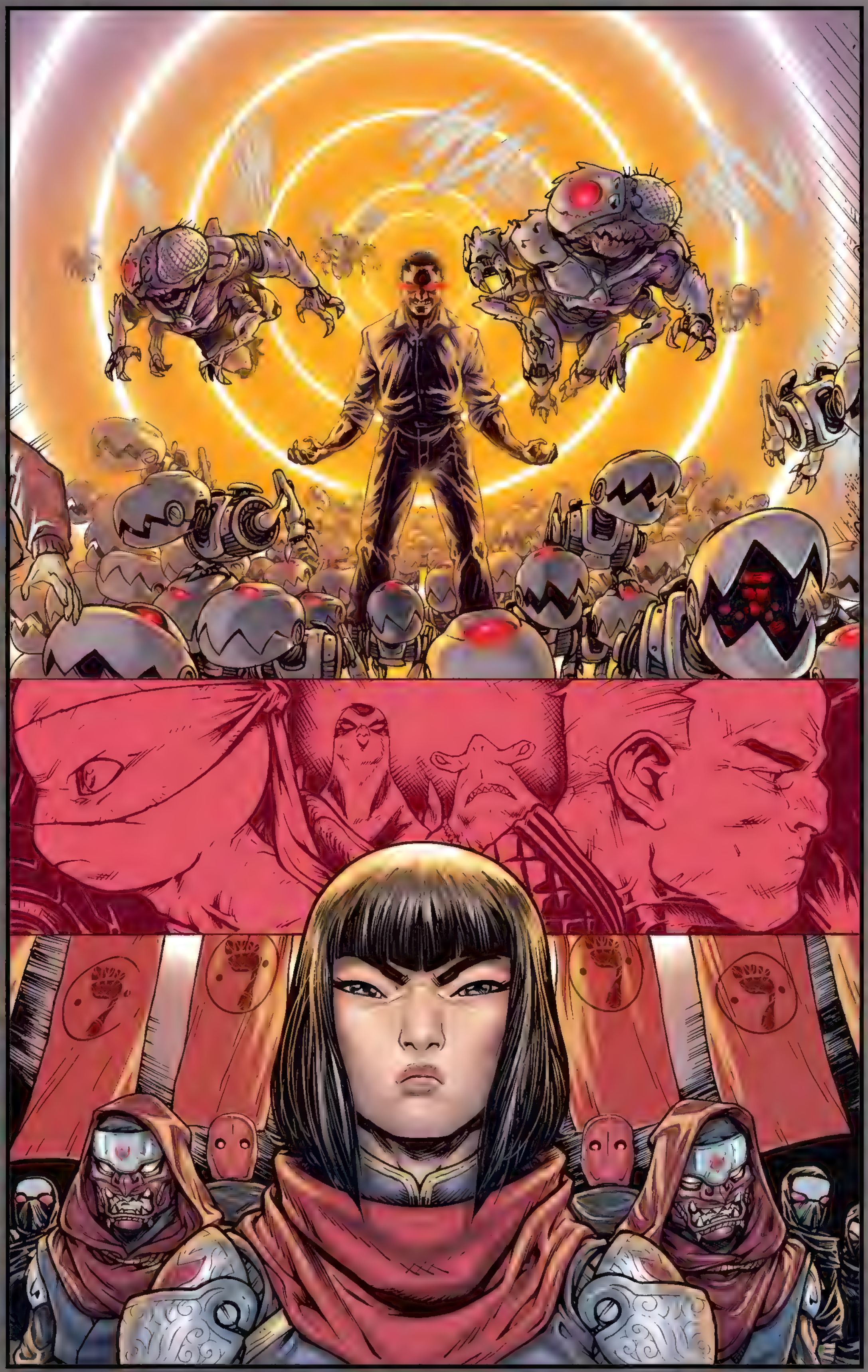
WHATEVER. WE WOULDA WALLOPED THOSE DORKS EVENTUALLY.

NO, RAPH, LEO'S RIGHT—WE DO HAVE TO BE MORE CAREFUL MOVING FORWARD.

DESPITE ALL WE'VE BEEN THROUGH, SOMETHING TELLS ME...

"...THE WORST IS YET TO COME."

art by VALERIO SCHITI
colors by CLAUDIA SG LANNICIELLO



ISSUE #46

art by MATEUS SANTOLOUCO

OKAY, THE CABLES ARE GOOD TO GO.

REMEMBER– WE WANT THEM **FIRMLY** CONNECTED AT ALL TIMES. PROBABLY SHOULD CHECK THEM THROUGHOUT EACH DAY.

I'M SYNCHED **REMOTELY** TO THE MACHINE ITSELF, SO I'LL MONITOR THE DATA FEED AT ALL TIMES BUT IT NEVER HURTS TO HAVE **OTHER** EYES CHECKING IT OUT ONCE IN AWHILE.

THE **ANTIBIOTIC DRIP'S** WORKING FINE, TOO. JUST MAKE SURE YOU FLUSH ANY AIR BUBBLES FROM THE TUBING WHENEVER YOU SWAP THE BAGS OUT.

LET'S TRY TO AVOID AN **EMBOLISM**, OKAY?

AND WE'VE GOT TO KEEP THE CATHETER AREA CLEAN TO AVOID **INFECTION.**

CHANGE THE DRESSING DAILY AND GENEROUSLY SWAB THE INSERTION AREA WITH ALCOHOL PADS.

AND, PLEASE... **WASH YOUR HANDS.** A LOT. BEFORE AND AFTER YOU DO **ANY** OF THIS STUFF.

OKAY, THAT'S IT...

...THE BEST I CAN DO FOR MYSELF FOR NOW.

HAROLD'S GATHERING UP MORE STABILIZING EQUIPMENT SO WE CAN SAFELY TRANSPORT THE BOD–I MEAN, ME TO THE LAIR SOON.

WE'LL JUST NEED TO BE SURE TO KEEP THINGS STERILE THERE, TOO.

WE WILL WORK *CAREFULLY* TO FOLLOW YOUR EXCELLENT INSTRUCTIONS, MY SON.

YEAH, DON'T WORRY, ROBO-BRO— WE GOTCHA COVERED.

WE'LL EVEN *SPIT-SHINE* OUR MITTS IF THAT'S WHAT IT TAKES.

NO SPIT, PLEASE, MIKE. SOAP AND HOT WATER ARE FINE.

YOU'RE HANDLIN' ALL THIS PRETTY GOOD, DONNIE. I DON'T THINK I COULD... ESPECIALLY *THIS* FAST.

YEAH, DON. YOU *SURE* YOU'RE OKAY?

HONESTLY, LEO, NO... I'M NOT.

NO MATTER HOW IT SEEMS, THIS... ALL OF THIS...

...IT'S JUST REALLY FREAKING ME OUT.

I'M GONNA GO CHECK ON HAROLD AND THE PROFESSOR.

POOR DONNIE.

INDEED. THE *TURMOIL* YOUR BROTHER MUST BE EXPERIENCING, IT'S... IT'S UNFATHOMABLE. I WISH *NOTHING MORE* THAN TO GIVE HIM COMFORT.

BUT... HOW?

I DON'T KNOW, FATHER. BUT ONE THING'S *FOR SURE*...

"...HE'S DEFINITELY NOT THE *ONLY ONE* FREAKING OUT RIGHT NOW."

C'MON, RAPH. THINGS ARE GOING TO BE *OKAY*, YOU'LL SEE.

NO. WE SHOULDA DONE *MORE* TO PROTECT HIM, ALOPEX. WE SCREWED UP... BIG TIME.

WHAT YOU *DID* WAS SAVE THE WORLD.

YOU COULDN'T *HELP* WHAT HAPPENED TO DONNIE.

WE LEFT HIM BEHIND. IF WE WOULDA STAYED, HE'D BE *ALL RIGHT* NOW.

NO, WE'D *ALL* BE DEAD. STOPPING THE TECHNODROME WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING. DONNIE KNEW THE RISKS AND HE STILL MADE THE CHOICE TO STAY BEHIND SO YOU GUYS COULD DO IT.

AND BAD AS THINGS TURNED OUT, AT LEAST HE'S STILL ALIVE.

HE'S A ROBOT.

WRONG. HE'S YOUR *BROTHER* AND HE NEEDS YOU.

HE'S NOT THE *ONLY* ONE.

LET'S GO, RAPH—WE'VE GOT *WORK* TO DO.

YEAH? LIKE WHAT?

MIKEY'S GONNA SEE IF HE CAN FIND *HOB* AND HIS CREW, AND YOU AND I NEED TO CHECK ON THE *FOOT* AND THE REST OF THE USUAL SUSPECTS.

FATHER THINKS THE CITY'S BOUND TO BE IN *FLUX* AFTER EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED AND WE NEED TO GET A BEAD ON THINGS AS *QUICK* AS WE CAN.

HE'S RIGHT. IT'S BETTER TO GET OUT *IN FRONT* OF WHATEVER CHANGES ARE COMING.

BUT DONNIE—

—IS IN *GOOD* HANDS. HAROLD AND FUGITOID WILL TAKE CARE OF HIM.

YEAH... I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT. SITTIN' HERE MOPIN' SURE *AIN'T* SOLVIN' NOTHIN'.

NOW YOU'RE *TALKIN'*, BRO. TIME TO HIT THE STREETS.

PAST TIME—WE'RE LOSING THE *DARK*. LET'S GO.

UM... THANKS, ALOPEX.

WHAT ARE *FRIENDS* FOR, RIGHT?

YEAH.

"FRIENDS," HUH?

WHAT?

OH, NOTHIN'... *FRIEND*.

C'MON, LET'S GET OUTTA HERE AND DO A LITTLE *PATROLLIN'* OF OUR OWN.

WHERE TO FIRST?

THE SECOND TIME AROUND STORE...

"...I WANNA FIND OUT WHAT *CASEY'S* BEEN UP TO."

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU *DOIN'* HERE, DAD?!

PERFECT TIMIN'! I WAS JUST TALKIN' 'BOUT *YOU*, KID.

LOOKS LIKE THAT AIN'T *ALL* YOU BEEN DOIN'. GUESS SOME THINGS *NEVER* CHANGE, HUH?

WHAT? THIS?

NAH, THIS AIN'T WHAT YER *THINKIN'*, KID.

GUESS I JUST GOT A LITTLE *THIRSTIER* THAN NORMAL, IS ALL. HAPPENS WHENEVER I'M IN THE MOOD TO CELEBRATE.

LIKE TONIGHT.

RIGHT. WHAT MAKES TONIGHT DIFFERENT THAN THE *OTHER* GAZILLION TIMES YOU SAID THE SAME DAMN THING?

THE FOOT, *THAT'S* WHAT.

SAW IT WITH MY *OWN* EYES, KID...

...THEY'RE HISTORY.

CASEY, DO... DO YOU KNOW WHAT HE'S TALKING ABOUT?

NO—AND *NEITHER* DOES HE. LIQUORED UP AND TALKIN' CRAZY.

WRONG!

I *TOLD* YOU—I WAS THERE. THAT RAT AND HIS CREW *TOOK OUT* KARAI'S BUNCH RIGHT IN THE FOOT'S OWN STINKIN' BACKYARD!

AND THE NEWS FLASH ON THE STREET IS SHREDDER GOT *ENDED* BY THEM GREEN FREAKS YOU BEEN ALL CHUMMY WITH LATELY, TOO.

SO YOU KNOW WHAT *THAT* MEANS, DON'T YA?

I DON'T GOTTA *KILL* YOU NO MORE, CASE.

SHREDDER'S DEAD AND THE HIT'S OFF.

WE CAN FINALLY BE A *FAMILY* AGAIN. THE JONES BOYS... BACK TOGETHER!

HE'S INSANE.

NAH. HE'S JUST *SICK.*

SICK AND *WEAK.*

GET OUT OF HERE, DAD.

JUST... JUST GO.

WAIT— DIDN'T YA *HEAR* ME, KID? I'M MY *OWN BOSS* AGAIN!

NO... YOU AIN'T. YOU'RE *HOLDIN'* YOUR BOSS IN YOUR HAND.

BUT, I—

I THINK YOU SHOULD GO NOW, SIR. I REALLY DO.

YEAH? YOU GONNA *MAKE* ME, PENCIL NECK?

WELL, *LOOK* AT THAT, WOULDYA?

LOOKS LIKE SHOWIN' UP IN THE NICK OF TIME'S BECOMIN' A *THING* FOR US, ALOPEX.

GET LOST, ARNIE.

GRRRR...

FINE. WHATEVER. YOU WANNA BE AN *UNGRATEFUL LITTLE TWERP* AND PICK THESE *LOSERS* OVER YOUR OWN FLESH AND BLOOD, THEN THAT'S ON *YOU*, KID.

CAN'T SAY *I* DIDN'T TRY, RIGHT?

AND THE NAME'S *HUN*, GIRL.

HEH. MORE LIKE *LUSH*, YOU ASK ME.

GRAHH!

I'LL CLEAN THAT UP.

LET ME HELP YOU, SON.

MR. AND MRS. O'NEIL... THESE ARE MY *FRIENDS*. ANGEL AND ALOPEX.

HI.

GUYS, THESE ARE APRIL'S PARENTS.

IT'S NICE TO *MEET* YOU.

OH... MY.

SO HOW *LONG* WERE YOU HERE?

LONG ENOUGH. OLD MAN'S GIVIN' A NEW MEANIN' TO '*ROIDED* AND *RIPPED*, I SEE. YOU OKAY?

YEAH—OLD NEWS. DUDE WAS SPEWIN' ALL HIS *NORMAL* CRAP. STUPID DRUNK.

WELL, I DON'T DISAGREE 'BOUT THE STUPID PART, BUT FADED AS HE WAS, HE *WASN'T* LYIN' 'BOUT ONE THING— THE FOOT GOT THEIR BUTTS *HANDED* TO 'EM BIG TIME.

BY THE TURTLES?

MM-HM. SPLINTER, TOO.

GOOD.

NOT TOTALLY. THERE'S SOME *REALLY BAD NEWS*, TOO, CASEY.

"WE HAVE BEEN *BATTERED*.

"WE HAVE BEEN *BLOODIED*..."

...MASTER SHREDDER IS GONE... BUT WE ARE BY *NO MEANS* BEATEN.

WE WILL *RISE* FROM THE DUST AND THE ASHES OF THIS DEFEAT AND WE WILL BECOME *MORE* FORMIDABLE THAN WE HAVE *EVER* BEEN.

BUT KNOW THIS— IF *I* AM TO LEAD YOU NOW... IF IT IS *MY* DESTINY TO TAKE UP THE MANTLE MY *GRANDFATHER* LEAVES BEHIND... THEN THE PATH WE FOLLOW MOVING FORWARD WILL BE DIFFERENT. IT WILL BE *OUR* PATH AND *OURS* ALONE.

WE WILL NO LONGER ALLOW *OUTSIDERS* TO ENTER THE SANCTITY OF OUR RANKS.

THE FOOT ARE A FAMILY AND STRANGERS ARE *NOT* WELCOME.

WE HAVE ALLOWED OUR HONOR AND OUR FIDELITY TO BE *INFECTED* BY THESE *FOREIGN DISEASES* FOR FAR TOO LONG.

WE KNOW *WHO* THEY ARE AND WE ARE WELL AWARE OF THE *PAIN* THEY HAVE CAUSED OUR FAMILY.

STARTING THIS VERY NIGHT, WE WILL *HUNT* THEM DOWN AND WE WILL *ERADICATE* THEM.

WE WILL USE SWORD, TOOTH, AND NAIL TO *CUT* THEIR CANCER FROM OUR COLLECTIVE BEING.

WE WILL BECOME OUR *OWN* CURE.

OUR MASTER IS DEAD BUT OUR CLAN *LIVES* ON!

FOOT CLAN!

"THIS IS ALMOST TOO MUCH TO TAKE IN..."

...I MEAN, ALL THIS DATA— IT'S FLOWING SO RAPIDLY AND YET I'M ABLE TO KEEP UP.

THING IS, I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW THAT'S POSSIBLE.

YES, I REMEMBER A SIMILAR SURPRISE WHEN I FIRST TRANSITIONED INTO MY MACHINE STATE.

IT'S ONE OF MANY FUNCTIONS OF YOUR NEW BODY YOU WILL NEED TO ADJUST TO, BUT NOT NECESSARILY AN UNFORTUNATE ONE.

FOR ONE OF YOUR ADVANCED INTELLECT, ACCELERATED COMPREHENSION AND ENHANCED DATA RETENTION MAY VERY WELL BE A BOON.

BUT THAT'S WHAT I'M SAYING—I KNOW I'M SMART, BUT I'M NOT *THIS* SMART.

AND IF IT WAS ONLY MY MIND THAT WAS TRANSFERRED INTO METALHEAD, SHOULDN'T I BE INTELLECTUALLY AT THE SAME LEVEL AS I WAS BEFORE?

I MEAN, NO PUN INTENDED, BUT ONLY MY SHELL CHANGED, RIGHT?

ONE WOULD THINK SO, YES.

BUT IN OUR EARLY TESTS OF MIND TRANSFERENCE ON PLANET NEUTRINO, WE FOUND THAT AN UNEXPECTED SYNTHESIS BETWEEN MAN AND MACHINE TAKES PLACE DURING THE TRANSFER...

...ONE WE COULD NEVER QUITE EXPLAIN.

IT'S AS IF THE NATURAL BRAIN SYNAPSES JOIN WITH THE ARTIFICIAL MECHANICAL PROCESSORS OF THE HOST SYSTEM, FORMING A **SYMBIOTIC BOND** OF SORTS, RAPIDLY PERFORMING MULTIPLE CALCULATIVE AND COGNITIVE FUNCTIONS.

LIKE... LIKE SOME KIND OF STRANGE **INTEGRATED CIRCUIT?**

EXACTLY, DONATELLO. STRANGE... AND OFTEN **EXHILARATING.**

MAYBE. BUT THERE'S *OTHER* THINGS... LIKE **HUNGER.**

I KNOW I DON'T NEED TO EAT—AT LEAST NOT IN THIS BODY—BUT MY MIND IS TELLING ME I SHOULD BE **STARVING** RIGHT NOW. AND **TIRED**. BUT I'M WIDE AWAKE.

AND THEN THERE'S THE **PAIN**... I'D SWEAR MY BACK IS KILLING ME WHERE THAT FREAK SMASHED ME WITH HIS HAMMER.

PHANTOM PAINS AND CIRCADIAN RHYTHM.

WHAT?

WHAT YOU'RE FEELING. YOUR BACK IS A *PHANTOM PAIN SENSATION*—HAPPENS TO A LOT OF AMPUTEES.

AND YOUR HUNGER AND TIREDNESS ARE JUST YOUR *BIOLOGICAL CLOCK* TICKING AT YOU.

FEELS MORE LIKE **TECHNOLOGY** THAN **BIOLOGY** AT THIS POINT, BUT I SEE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, I GUESS.

NO *GUESSING* ABOUT IT. AND SPEAKING OF TECHNOLOGY, HOW'S THAT *ARM* HOLDING UP?

I DIDN'T EXACTLY HAVE MUCH TIME TO *REATTACH* IT AFTER YOUR FRIEND ZAPPED YOUR TURTLE BRAIN INTO THIS CHASSIS, LET ALONE *BETA TEST* IT.*

SEE TMNT #45-B.C.

SEEMS TO BE WORKING FINE. YOU DID SOME **GOOD WORK** AS ALWAYS, HAROLD, **ESPECIALLY UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES.**

MEH. NOT LIKE IT WAS TOO DIFFICULT.

I'VE HAD *PLENTY* OF PRACTICE REPAIRING MY STUFF SINCE I MET YOU.

IS YOUR FRIEND ALWAYS SO DISGRUNTLED?

NAH, DON'T LET HAROLD **FOOL** YOU, PROFESSOR.

HE PUTS ON A GRUMPY MASK, BUT **UNDERNEATH** IT ALL...

"...HE'S A REALLY GOOD GUY."

WELL, I'M SUPER-GLAD YOU AND YOUR BROS ARE ALL *ALIVE*, MIKESTER, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED.

BUMMER ABOUT DONNIE, BUT COULDA BEEN *WAY WORSE* IF YOU REALLY THINK ABOUT IT.

YEAH, I *KNOW*, WOODY.

RUPERT'S PIZZERIA

'SIDES, THE FUGITOID SAYS HE'S WORKIN' ON A WAY TO *FIX* DONNIE BACK TO NORMAL.

HE HAS ALL KINDS OF COOL TECH ON *BURNOW ISLAND* TO WORK WITH NOW, TOO.

SEE. *THAT'S* SOMETHING.

BUT THAT'S NOT *ALL* THAT'S BUGGIN' YOU, HUH, AMIGO?

NO, NOT REALLY. IT'S JUST...

...IT'S JUST THAT WE BEAT *KRANG*, AND WE'RE PRETTY SURE *SHREDDER*, TOO, AND STILL THE *FIRST THING* MY DAD'S GOT US DOIN' IS LOOKIN' FOR WHERE THE *NEXT TROUBLE'S* GONNA COME FROM.

IT'S, LIKE, WHAT'S THE *POINT*, DUDE?

I TRY TO ACT ALL TOUGH IN FRONT OF MY FAMILY, BUT *JUST ONCE* I WISH THE FIGHTIN' WOULD LEAD TO SOMETHIN' *GOOD* AND NOT JUST *MORE* FIGHTIN', YOU KNOW?

I HEAR YA, BRO. BUT YOU GUYS *DID* SAVE THE WHOLE WORLD FROM A GNARLY DEATH.

FAR AS YOUR OL' BUDDY WOODY'S CONCERNED, *THAT'S* A DARN GOOD THING.

THAT *IS* PRETTY *AWESOME*, HUH?

THANKS, MAN— I *NEEDED* THAT... AND *THIS!* NOW I GOT SOME *MUTANIMALS* TO FIND.

NO WORRIES, BRO. JUST REMEMBER, *TOUGH* AS YOU NINJA DUDES ARE...

THE MIKESTER... *LIKE A BOSS!*

"...IT'S OKAY TO ASK FOR *HELP* FROM YOUR FRIENDS SOMETIMES."

New York Tech Staff Parking

SLAM

CRIPES, MILLER...

...*WHAT* HAVE YOU GOTTEN YOURSELF INTO?

"DEMONS?"

EARLIER.

THAT'S HARD TO *BELIEVE*, PROFESSOR.

HARDER TO BELIEVE THAN *MUTANT HUMANOID TURTLES* AND *ANCIENT NINJA LORDS* RETURNING FROM THE *DEAD*?

UM, YEAH. POINT TAKEN.

AS I WAS SAYING, MISS O'NEIL, IT'S ALL *RIGHT HERE* IN THE SCROLL.

ACCORDING TO THIS, THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO, A *SMALL FAMILY* OF INCREDIBLY POWERFUL *IMMORTALS* RULED THE EARTH.

A *PANTHEON*, IF YOU WILL.

EACH SOUGHT TO *IMPOSE* THEIR WILL OVER THE OTHERS IN A SEEMINGLY *ENDLESS* GAME OF CONQUEST AND INTRIGUE.

BUT THEN THEY MYSTERIOUSLY *DISAPPEARED* DURING A TIME OF *GREAT CALAMITY* AND *MASSIVE DESTRUCTION.*

LIKE THE *BIBLICAL* FLOOD?

PERHAPS. THERE ARE STORIES OF A GREAT FLOOD ACROSS *MANY* RELIGIONS AND CULTURES THROUGHOUT HISTORY, SO *WHATEVER* THE SOURCE, ALL SEEM TO BE IN *AGREEMENT* IT HAPPENED.

IT CONTINUES THAT, IN TIME, THEY INSPIRED *MYTH* AND *LEGEND*, AND WERE BELIEVED TO BE *GONE* FOREVER.

BUT THEY *WEREN'T* GONE. THEY SIMPLY *WAITED*.

WAITED AND WATCHED AS THE CHAOS OF THE RAPIDLY MULTIPLYING MORTAL RACE *OVERTOOK* THE WORLD THAT ONCE BELONGED TO THEM.

WAITED? FOR *WHAT?*

ALL THE WHILE ANTICIPATING THE *CONTINUATION* OF THEIR GAME—A *RESURRECTION* OF THE CONTEST BETWEEN THEM THAT WOULD UNFOLD OVER LONG CENTURIES.

MORTAL CREATURES WOULD BE THEIR *PAWNS*, AFFECTING THE WORLD ON THE *IMMORTALS' BEHALF* DURING THE LONG MARCH TOWARDS AN ENDGAME...

...WITH THE *ULTIMATE PRIZE* BEING UNCONTESTED *CONTROL* OF THE WORLD.

WOW. THIS IS ALL VERY... WOW.

YES. AND THERE IS AN INDICATION IN THE TEXT THAT THERE'S A *COMPANION PIECE* TO IT—A BOOK OF SOME KIND—THAT'S BEING HELD SEPARATELY IN THE *AMERICAN SOUTHWEST* SOMEWHERE.

WHY IN AMERICA?

I DON'T KNOW WHY—I'VE ONLY JUST *BEGUN* TO DECIPHER IT AND EVERYTHING ABOUT IT IS MYSTERIOUS. I FOUND IT AMONGST THE FOOT'S ARCHIVES AND I'M NOT EVEN CERTAIN THEY *KNOW* IT EXISTS.

IT SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN HIDDEN AWAY FOR QUITE SOME TIME WHEN I DISCOVERED IT AND, FRANKLY, I DON'T KNOW *WHY* I TOOK IT. IT JUST FELT... *SIGNIFICANT*.

AND NOW *I'M* GOING TO TAKE IT FROM *YOU*.

WHAT? *WAIT!* YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO *DO* WITH THAT!

I WANT *SPLINTER* TO TAKE A LOOK AT THIS TO SEE IF IT MAKES *ANY* SENSE TO HIM... AND TO FIGURE OUT IF THE FOOT ARE INVOLVED.

NOW, YOU CAN TRY TO STOP ME, BUT THAT DIDN'T GO SO WELL FOR YOU LAST TIME, DID IT, PROFESSOR?

GOOD.

I'LL BE IN TOUCH, PROFESSOR. STAY SAFE!

"STAY SAFE," SHE SAYS.

YEAH...

...RIGHT.

HELLO, PROFESSOR MILLER.

HRRGK!

SHUPP

AND GOOD-BYE.

"YOU LOOK *SURPRISED*," MY FRIEND..."

...DID YOU REALLY THINK STOCKGEN WAS THE *ONLY HAND* I WAS PLAYING IN THE GAME?

YOU MISTAKE *IMPATIENCE* FOR SURPRISE, STOCKMAN. MY *REUNION* WITH MY CLAN *AWAITS* AND I GROW *WEARY* OF THESE DELAY TACTICS. I AM BEGINNING TO REGRET *GRANTING* YOU MY TIME.

PERHAPS YOU ARE NOT AS PREPARED TO BE MY *PARTNER* AS YOU CLAIMED, *HM?*

OH, YE OF LITTLE FAITH. WHY DO YOU THINK I BROUGHT YOU *HERE* BEFORE RETURNING YOU TO YOUR *KUNG FU CRONIES*, EH?

THE TRUTH IS, I MAINTAIN A NUMBER OF *OFFSHOOT* AND *FRONT COMPANIES*.

THIS PARTICULAR ONE I SET UP UTILIZING FUNDS I WAS *SECRETLY* FUNNELING AWAY FROM THE STOCKGEN PROJECTS BEING FINANCED BY GENERAL KRANG.

WHAT DO THE LETTERS REPRESENT?

T.C.R.I.?

THAT WOULD BE THE *TECHNO COSMIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE.*

I THOUGHT THE NAME AN *APROPOS PUN* CONSIDERING *WHO* THE UNWITTING BENEFACTOR WAS.

I HAVE *NO INTEREST* IN PUNS, STOCKMAN. NOR DO I HAVE *RESPECT* FOR A BUSINESS PARTNER WHO OPENLY ADMITS HE IS A *DISHONORABLE THIEF.*

OH, DON'T YOU WORRY, SHREDDER—THAT WAS THE *OLD EMBEZZLING STOCKMAN*. NOT THE *NEW HERO STOCKMAN*, WHO SAVED YOUR LIFE EVEN THOUGH HE COULD HAVE JUST AS EASILY LEFT YOU FOR DEAD.

NO, THE NEW STOCKMAN HAS A *VESTED INTEREST* IN BEING COMPLETELY FRANK WITH YOU, EVEN ABOUT *PAST TRANSGRESSIONS*.

IT'S JUST GOOD BUSINESS.

LET'S GO *INSIDE*, SHALL WE?

BY THE WAY, HOW DO YOU LIKE THE NEW *SUIT* WE GOT YOU?

I FIND IT... UNCOMFORTABLE.

HM. YES. NOT ENOUGH *RAZOR SPIKES*, I SUPPOSE.

NEVER FEAR—MY DRIVER WILL DELIVER YOUR *ARMOR* INSIDE, WHERE YOU CAN BE AS *SHINY* AND *CONSPICUOUS* AS YOU PLEASE.

SO, AS I WAS TELLING YOU EARLIER IN THE LIMO, I THINK YOU WILL BE *VERY PLEASED* WITH WHAT I'M ABOUT TO SHOW YOU.

YOU SEE, WHEN I WAS A BOY, MY FATHER WAS AN AVID CHESS PLAYER—AN *OBSESSIVE FANATIC*, REALLY.

AND HE *CONSTANTLY* USED THE GAME AS A TEACHING TOOL, ALWAYS TRYING TO *INSTILL* IN ME THE IMPORTANCE OF STAYING AS MANY MOVES *AHEAD* OF MY OPPONENTS AS POSSIBLE.

AFTER YOU.

THERE ARE MANY THINGS I *DISLIKED* ABOUT MY FATHER, BUT THE LESSONS I LEARNED AT HIS CHESS TABLE ARE ONES I TOOK *VERY MUCH* TO HEART.

AS YOU ARE ABOUT TO SEE.

CLICK

SO, WHAT DO YOU *THINK*...

...*PARTNER?*

"WELL, THIS HAS CERTAINLY BEEN AN *EVENTFUL EVENING*..."

...BUT I THINK I'VE REACHED MY *LIMIT*. TIME FOR THIS OL' GAL TO GET SOME SHUT-EYE.

THIS OL' GUY, TOO.

IT WAS VERY NICE TO *MEET* YOU, ANGEL AND ALOPEX.

SAME HERE, MRS. O'NEIL.

PLEASE... CALL ME BETH.

GOOD NIGHT, ALL.

THEY'RE NICE PEOPLE, JONES.

YOU GOT YOURSELF INTO SOMETHIN' *REALLY GOOD* HERE.

DON'T I KNOW IT.

IT'S *EASY* TO SEE WHY APRIL IS THE WAY SHE IS.

SPEAKIN' OF APRIL, I NEED TO GIVE HER A *CALL* TO SEE HOW THINGS WENT AT HER SCHOOL TONIGHT AND SEE IF SHE KNOWS ABOUT DONNIE AND THE OTHERS.

YO! LOSERS!

WHAT THE HELL?

SERIOUSLY?

YOU KNOW HOW MRS. O'NEIL SAID THIS WAS AN *EVENTFUL* NIGHT?

"LOOKS LIKE WE'RE JUST GETTIN' TO THE *MAIN EVENT.*"

TIME FOR THE *PURPLE DRAGONS* TO REMIND THIS STREET WHO'S *REALLY* IN CHARGE!

SECOND TIME AROUND

art by KEVIN EASTMAN
colors by RONDA PATTISON

ISSUE #47

art by MATEUS SANTOLOUCO

WHAT? NO *WELCOMIN'* COMMITTEE?!

WHADDYA THINK, LINK? TIME TO START KNOCKIN' ON SOME DOORS TO *WAKE* THESE LOSERS UP?

YOU SAID IT, BOSS. MAYBE KNOCK SOME *HEADS*, TOO.

YEAH— STARTIN' WITH *THAT GUEY.*

WHAT'S *WRONG*, MALO...

...DIDN'T I BREAK YOUR FACE *ENOUGH* ALREADY TONIGHT?*

*See **TMNT #45** – B.C.

WHAT IS IT, JOHN... WHAT'S GOING ON?

CALL 9-1-1, BETH. TELL THEM...

"...TELL THEM TO SEND *EVERYONE*."

GO HOME, DAD—YER DRUNK AS A SKUNK.

CHECK IT OUT, BOYS. BABY JONES NEEDS A *LITTLE GIRL* TO STICK UP FOR HIM.

HEH. GUESS IT'S HIS *GUARDIAN ANGEL*, HUH? GOT HIMSELF A NEW *PUPPY DOG*, TOO.

WEAK. SO STINKIN' WEAK.

YEAH? WELL, I LEARNED FROM AN *EXPERT*, DIDN'T I?

HEY, WHAT CAN I SAY—I WAS JUST A REGULAR MOOK TRYIN' TO DO THE *BEST* WITH WHAT I HAD. BUT THEN MY BEST GOT *BETTER*.

NOW I GOT *ALL KINDS* OF IMPORTANT LESSONS TO TEACH YA. LIKE THE ONE I LEARNED A LONG TIME AGO IN SUNDAY SCHOOL. IT'S REAL *SIMPLE*...

CLUG CLUG CLUG

HONOR YOUR FATHER.

SORRY, I *ALREADY* LEARNED A LOT ABOUT HONOR OVER THE LAST YEAR...

...NONE OF IT FROM YOU!

"MY GOD, THEY'RE COMPLETELY *OUTNUMBERED*..."

...THEY'LL *NEVER* SURVIVE WITHOUT HELP!

JOHN! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!

TO *HELP!*

"I CAN'T JUST *STAND BY* AND WATCH..."

...IT WOULDN'T BE *RIGHT*, PRIYA.

BUT... WHAT WILL YOU DO, ARUNE?

RETURN A FAVOR.

STUPID MOVE, KID, *STEPPIN' UP* TO US LIKE THAT.

STUPID? YOU MEAN LIKE LEAVIN' MY *LEGS* FREE?

GRAHH!

KISH

OOPS. LOOKS LIKE YOU *SPILLED* AGAIN. NO ONE LIKES A SLOPPY DRUNK.

YER *DONE*, BOY. AIN'T NO ONE COMIN' TO RESCUE YOU *THIS* TIME. I'M GONNA—

CRAK

COK

WHO THE...?

ARUNE? MR. O'NEIL?

WHAT THE HELL'RE YOU DOIN'?!

N-NO BIGGIE. JUST *HELPING* A NEIGHBOR.

WITH A *TOASTER?*

IT'S *ALL* I HAD TIME TO GRAB.

BESIDES...

...I NEVER COULD GET THE DAMNED THING TO *WORK* PROPERLY, ANYWAY!

THUMP

UFF!

WHOP

YAHH!

DON'T LOOK NOW, BOYS, BUT YOU JUST GOT *OWNED* BY A "LITTLE GIRL."

OH, AND THE "PUPPY DOG?"

SHE *BITES.*

AAAAHH!

GRRARR!

UHH... WHAT NOW, CASEY?

WELL, UNLESS YOU GOT ANOTHER *KITCHEN APPLIANCE* HANDY, BATTER UP.

OH, MAN, MY WIFE'S GOING TO *KILL ME* IF THIS BEAST DOESN'T FIRST.

"YO, T-BOY, AIN'T THAT *ARUNE* FROM THE CORNER STORE?"

YEAH, THAT'S *HIM*, JIMMY. WHAT'S HE DOIN' IN THE MIDDLE OF ALLA THAT CRAZY, THOUGH?

WHAT *WE* SHOULD BE DOIN', BRO...

...PROTECTIN' WHAT'S OURS.

C'MON!

YOU MADE A *MISTAKE*, CASE, HOOKIN' UP WITH THESE WIMPS!

NAH, DAD. I DIDN'T.

HONESTLY, IT'S PROBABLY THE *SMARTEST THING* I EVER DONE.

HNAK

UNF!

"'CAUSE I *FINALLY* FIGURED OUT, THE FAMILY YER *BORN* WITH..."

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

WE *BACKIN' UP* OUR BOY ARUNE, THAT'S WHAT!

THE NICE MAN FROM THE STORE?

"...AIN'T NECESSARILY THE ONE THAT TURNS OUT TO BE YOUR *REAL* FAMILY."

WE'LL HELP TOO!

THE KIND THAT STANDS BY YOU *NO MATTER* WHAT.

GET READY...

NOW!

"ALWAYS THERE TO HELP YOU *EVEN* WHEN THINGS'RE TOUGH.

"ALWAYS READY TO PROVE THAT SOMETIMES *BLOOD'S JUST BLOOD.*"

GRAAHH!

YOU THINK YER THE *ONLY* ONE WITH A NEW FAMILY?!

LOOK AROUND ME, KID—I GOT ME *ALL* THE FAMILY I NEED TO *BURN* THIS BLOCK TO THE STINKIN' GROUND!

YEAH?

"LOOKS LIKE YER ON YOUR *OWN* TO ME."

FORGET THIS!

YOU OWE ME SOME NEW *GROCERIES*, YOU BULLY!

THAT'S RIGHT, PUNKS—RUN AWAY! THIS IS *OUR* 'HOOD!

WE DID IT!

HA HAHAHA HAHA!

WHAT THE HELL'S SO FUNNY?

ME AND YOU, KID—*THAT'S* WHAT.

WE *BOTH* THOUGHT WE WAS RIGHT AND IT TURNS OUT WE WAS *BOTH* WRONG.

THEM WIMPS HIGHTAILIN' IT OUTTA HERE? THEY *AIN'T* MY FAMILY. THEY'RE JUST DIME-A-DOZEN STREET PUNKS.

REPLACIN 'EM'S *EASY* AS FLASHIN' AROUND WADS OF DOUGH AND PROMISIN' *MORE* WHERE IT CAME FROM.

BUT THAT DON'T MAKE 'EM *ANY DIFFERENT* THAN THESE WIMPS. I MEAN, C'MON—*ONE SECOND* I SEE YOU WITH THOSE GREEN FREAKS, THE NEXT WITH THESE STUCK-UP PENCIL NECKS.

YER *EXCHANGIN'* FAMILY AS FAST AS I'M *RECRUITIN'* NEW GANG BANGERS.

DONCHA SEE, CASE? THE ONLY CONSTANT IN *ALL* OF THIS IS *ME*... AND *YOU*... AND THE WAY WE *BOTH* HANDLE ANY PROBLEM THAT GETS IN OUR WAY—EVEN IF THAT PROBLEM HAPPENS TO BE EACH OTHER.

THE *JONES* WAY.

WITH *FISTS* AND *FEET*.

WITH *BLOOD* AND *BROKEN BONES*.

I WAS LAUGHIN' 'CAUSE I THOUGHT I NEEDED TO *TEACH* YOU A LESSON TONIGHT WHEN IT TURNS OUT YOU BEEN *LEARNIN'* JUST FINE ALL ALONG.

YER *RIGHT*, KID—SOMETIME'S BLOOD'S *JUST* BLOOD...

...AND NO MATTER WHAT, THERE AIN'T *NOTHIN'* YOU CAN DO TO CHANGE IT.

HANDS OFF THE KID, DIRTBALL!

AND DON'T *MOVE* A MUSCLE!

THAT'S *HIM*, OFFICER—THE *BIG ONE*! HIS GROUP *STARTED* ALL OF THIS.

IT'S OKAY, MA'AM, WE KNOW *EXACTLY* WHO'S RESPONSIBLE...

...*DON'T* WE, HUN?

TALK TO MY LAWYER, COP. I ALREADY SAID WHAT I *NEEDED* TO SAY.

YEAH? WELL, THAT *IS* YOUR RIGHT.

CUFF THIS SCUMBAG.

I'M *DETECTIVE KARA LEWIS*, FOLKS, AND ON BEHALF OF THE CITY, I WANNA THANK YOU.

YOU JUST HELPED US *BAG* ONE OF NEW YORK'S MOST WANTED.

MOST WANTED, HUH?

NOT BY ME.

YO, DETECTIVE LEWIS! I SWEAR I JUST SAW A *GIANT WHITE FOX* AN—

NUH-UH. NOPE. *STOP* RIGHT THERE, JOHNSON.

WE GOT HUN—THAT'S ENOUGH.

ANYTHING ELSE IS *MORE PAPERWORK*...

"...AND I *HATE* PAPERWORK."

THIS IS AS *INTRIGUING* AND *MYSTERIOUS* AS YOU *TOLD* US, MISS O'NEIL...

...AND YOU SAY YOUR PROFESSOR BELIEVES THE FOOT HAVE *NO IDEA* THEY POSSESSED IT IN THEIR ARCHIVES?

IT LITERALLY *HURTS* TO SEE DONNIE THIS WAY, RAPH.

DON'T IT, THOUGH? WAIT 'TILL YOU SEE THE *ROBOT* VERSION.

I... I STILL CAN'T *PROCESS* IT ALL.

MISS O'NEIL?

HM? I'M SORRY, MASTER SPLINTER— WHAT WERE YOU SAYING?

HE WAS ASKING IF YOU'RE *SURE* THE FOOT DOESN'T KNOW THIS SCROLL EXISTS, APRIL.

SURE? NO.

BUT I GENUINELY BELIEVE PROFESSOR MILLER IS ***TERRIFIED*** OF SHREDDER AND WOULD ***NEVER*** HAVE TAKEN THE SCROLL IF HE THOUGHT FOR A SECOND THEY'D MISS IT.

INDEED.

SO, WHAT DO YOU THINK, FATHER?

DO WE ***DESTROY*** THIS ONE, TOO?

NO, MY SON, WE DO NOT.

UNLIKE OROKU SAKI'S ***ASHI NO HIMITSU****, THIS DOCUMENT NOT ONLY SPEAKS OF THREATS FROM THE ***ANCIENT PAST***, BUT OF POTENTIAL DANGERS ***TO COME*** AS WELL.

AS MYSTERIOUS AS IT IS, IT WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO MAINTAIN ***SOME FOREWARNING*** OF FUTURE JEOPARDY.

*See **THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE FOOT CLAN** – B.C.

CHECK OUT THAT ***RAT DUDE***, BRO.

TOTALLY WEIRD, ***HUH?***

YEAH... WEIRD.

IT CERTAINLY BEGS ***FURTHER*** EXPLORATION. BUT WE HAVE MORE ***IMMEDIATE CONCERNS***, I'M AFRAID.

THE FUTURE WILL HAVE TO WAIT.

NOT NECESSARILY.

CASEY AND I'VE BEEN TALKING AND WE'D LIKE TO DO *MORE* TO HELP OUT.

IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'D LIKE TO *KEEP* THE SCROLL SO HE AND I CAN CONTINUE THE INVESTIGATION.

CASEY? WE RAN INTO HIS *OLD MAN* EARLIER AFTER WE BROUGHT DONNIE'S BODY HERE.*

*See **TMNT FCBD: PRELUDE TO VENGEANCE** – B.C.

DUDE! IT SOUNDS TOTALLY *CREEPY* WHEN YOU SAY IT LIKE THAT.

MAYBE 'CAUSE IT *IS* CREEPY, MIKE.

ANYWAY... IT LOOKS LIKE HUN'S BEEN *CUT LOOSE* FROM THE FOOT. AND HE MAY BE *DRINKING* AGAIN.

YEAH. DUDE'S A TOTAL MESS.

WELL, IF HUN'S RUNNING AROUND CAUSING TROUBLE, THEN IT'S ALL THE *MORE* REASON FOR CASEY TO GO WITH ME.

GO WITH YOU? WHERE?

OUT *WEST.*

BREAK TIME'S *OVER* FOR ME...

"...TIME TO GET *BACK TO WORK.*"

YOU'RE SAYING, THEY *VANISHED?*

YES. WHEN WE FOUND HUN, HE WASN'T ALONE—THE *TURTLE MUTANTS* WERE WITH HIM.

WE THOUGHT WE SHOULD ATTACK *THEM* FIRST, BUT THEY FLED.

THEY ALL... *ESCAPED.*

ALL?

MUTANTS *AND* THE TRAITOR HUMAN?

TALK ABOUT *MEGA FAIL.*

GUESS NOT *EVERYONE* CAN HANDLE SPECIAL MISSIONS, HEY, B?

SILENCE, FOOLS!

THE TURTLES... THEY HAD A *SECRET WEAPON,* KARAI.

AN *INTELLIGENT ROBOT* THAT COULD SPRAY FIRE AND—

REPELLED BY A SECRET WEAPON? AGAIN?

YOUR EXCUSES ARE BECOMING AS *UNINSPIRED* AS YOUR FIGHTING SKILLS.

AND YET, THEY SPEAK THE *TRUTH.*

FORTUNATELY, SECRET WEAPONS ARE NOT *SOLELY ACCESSIBLE* TO OUR ENEMIES.

MASTER SHREDDER!

QUITE THE *OFFICE SPACE* YOU HAVE HERE, SHREDDER.

IT'S SO... *YOU.*

GRANDFATHER, WE... WE THOUGHT YOU *DEAD*.

IT WAS *OUR FAULT*, MASTER.

WE CRAVENLY *ABANDONED* YOU ON THE ISLAND. WE—

ENOUGH. I WILL HEAR *NO MORE* OF THIS USELESS PRATTLE.

WE HAVE *ALREADY* SPOKEN OF SECRET WEAPONS, AND THAT WAS PRECISELY *WHAT* WE FACED ON BURNOW ISLAND.

BUT *CULPABILITY* FOR MY NEAR-DEATH DOES NOT FALL ON *THAT* WEAPON, *NOR* WITH ANY INDIVIDUAL IN THIS ROOM.

BETRAYAL IS AT THE HEART OF THE MATTER— A MATTER I FULLY INTEND TO *RECTIFY* IN SHORT ORDER WITH THE HELP OF EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU.

NOW, HOWEVER, I WISH ONLY FOR *KARAI* TO REMAIN PRESENT.

AW YEAH, THE *BIG BOSS* IS BACK!

TOLD YA *NOTHIN'* COULD WASTE THE SHREDDER, PAL!

THE MASTER SAID FOR *ALL* TO LEAVE, SCIENTIST.

NO, KARAI... STOCKMAN STAYS.

WE HAVE *IMPORTANT BUSINESS* TO CONDUCT.

IMPORTANT... BUSINESS?

BUT, GRANDFATHER, THE CLAN VERY NEARLY *FELL* BECAUSE OF OUR TRUST IN STRANGERS.

DOCTOR STOCKMAN IS NO *STRANGER* TO US, KARAI.

AN *OUTSIDER*, THEN.

WE ARE THE FOOT—A *FAMILY*. WE NEED *NO OTHERS* BUT OURSELVES. WE MUST *PURGE* THOSE WHO DO NOT BELONG.

MUST? YOU *FORGET* YOURSELF, *CHUNIN*.

THE ONLY THING THAT *MUST* HAPPEN IS THAT WHICH *I* DEEM NECESSARY.

I... I AM SORRY, MASTER. I HAVE *OVERSTEPPED* MY AUTHORITY.

YOU CANNOT OVERSTEP WHAT YOU *DO NOT* POSSESS, GRANDDAUGHTER.

BUT THAT IS A DISCUSSION FOR *ANOTHER* DAY.

GET UP.

YOUR BLAME IS *MISPLACED*, KARAI. NO *OUTSIDER* HAS CAUSED THE RECENT DANGERS FACED BY OUR CLAN.

IN TRUTH, THE FOUNDATION FOR OUR CURRENT DILEMMA WAS LAID LONG AGO, FROM *WITHIN* THE VERY FAMILY YOU SEEK TO DEFEND.

AN *ANCIENT* TREACHERY.

BROTHER AGAINST BROTHER.

HAMATO YOSHI.

INDEED. AND TODAY WE *DESTROY* THE RAT IN OUR MIDST.

ARE YOU *READY* TO BEGIN, DOCTOR?

I WAS STARTING TO THINK YOU'D *NEVER* ASK.

JUST A FEW QUICK ADJUSTMENTS...

BUT... WE ARE THE FOOT CLAN. WE DON'T *NEED* THIS MAN'S HELP TO RIGHT ANY WRONGS WE'VE SUFFERED. WE...

...WE CAN DO THAT FOR *OURSELVES*.

AND WE WILL. WHEN THE DOCTOR HAS COMPLETED HIS TASK, OUR FORCES WILL *FOLLOW ON* TO ENSURE THE DESTRUCTION I DESIRE IS COMPLETE.

BUT, GRANDFATHER, IS THIS... IS THIS *HONORABLE?*

HONORABLE, KARAI?

THIS IS *VENGEANCE.*

PERSONALIZE IT *ALL* YOU WANT, NINJA. BUT FOR ME, THIS—AND *ALL* THINGS—REMAINS STRICTLY *BUSINESS.*

AND *TODAY'S* BUSINESS HAPPENS TO BE...

...*EXTERMINATION.*

UH, DETECTIVE LEWIS...

...I KNOW YOU TOLD ME TO BE *QUIET*, BUT–

YEAH, YEAH... I *SEE* IT, TOO, JOHNSON.

"DO YOU *SEE* THAT?"

THERE... IN THE *SKY*, ANGEL.

WHAT THE HELL?

"THANKS FOR LOANING ME *CASEY* ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE, MOM AND DAD."

IT'S JUST A LITTLE *ROAD TRIP* WHILE I'M ON BREAK. I THOUGHT IT'D BE NICE TO GET OUT AND *EXPLORE* THE DESERT.

GET SOME FRESH AIR.

IT'S FINE, KIDDO.

AFTER TONIGHT, I THINK CASEY COULD REALLY *USE* SOME TIME AWAY.

AND WITH HIS FATHER IN POLICE CUSTODY NOW...

...I THINK THINGS WILL *CALM DOWN* AROUND HERE.

"UM, GENTLEMEN, I THINK WE'VE GOT A BIG PROBLEM..."

...IF I'M INTERPRETING THESE READINGS CORRECTLY, THAT IS.

WELL, YES, DONATELLO. WE'VE ALREADY DISCUSSED THAT THIS EQUIPMENT WILL NOT BE SUFFICIENT ENOUGH TO SOLVE YOUR CURRENT PROBLEMS.

BUT ONCE I RETRIEVE MORE FROM BURNO—

NO, PROFESSOR HONEYCUTT—THIS ISN'T ABOUT ME. IT'S ABOUT MY FAMILY.

OF COURSE IT IS.

YOUR FAMILY?

WHEN WE MOVED MY BODY TO OUR LAIR, I SET UP MONITORING STATIONS THROUGHOUT THE PLACE SO I CAN STAY REMOTELY CONNECTED TO MY VITAL SIGNS.

WHILE I WAS AT IT, I LINKED MYSELF TO THE SECURITY SYSTEMS I INSTALLED RIGHT AFTER WE MOVED IN, TOO.

FIGURED IT COULDN'T HURT TO KEEP AN EYE ON THINGS AT HOME EVEN WHEN I'M NOT THERE.

SO?

SO, I WAS DOING AN INTERFACE TEST BETWEEN MY NEW BODY AND THE EXTERNAL MONITORS HERE WHEN I GOT A PING FROM THE LAIR'S SECURITY SYSTEM.

AND SINCE I ALSO HAVE DOPPLER RADAR SET UP AROUND THE CHURCH, I TAPPED INTO THAT TO SEE WHAT I COULD FIND OUT AND...

...WELL, LOOK FOR YOURSELF.

WHAT IS THAT?

I DON'T KNOW. BUT WHATEVER IT IS...

...IT'S EXTREMELY BIG AND FAST...

"...AND IT'S HEADING STRAIGHT FOR MY HOUSE."

HEY, ANYONE SEEN THE REMOTE?

DID YOU CHECK IN THE *FRIDGE*, DORK?

THAT'S WHERE YOU LEFT IT LAST TI—

KRRRS...!

GAHH!

MY SONS! *ARE YOU OKAY?!*

YES, FATHER, WE'RE *KOFF* GOOD.

WAS THAT AN *EARTHQUAKE* OR SOMETHIN'?

TARGET LOCATED. PRIORITY MISSION...

...*KILL THE RAT!*

IT'S STOCKMAN'S *FLYBORGS!*

AND *FLYING MOUSERS*, TOO!

MY SONS! WE MUST *PROTECT* YOUR BROTHER!

UH, SENSEI, SOMETHIN' *TELLS* ME...

PRIORITY MISSION...

KILL THE RAT.

...IT AIN'T *DON* THEY'RE AFTER.

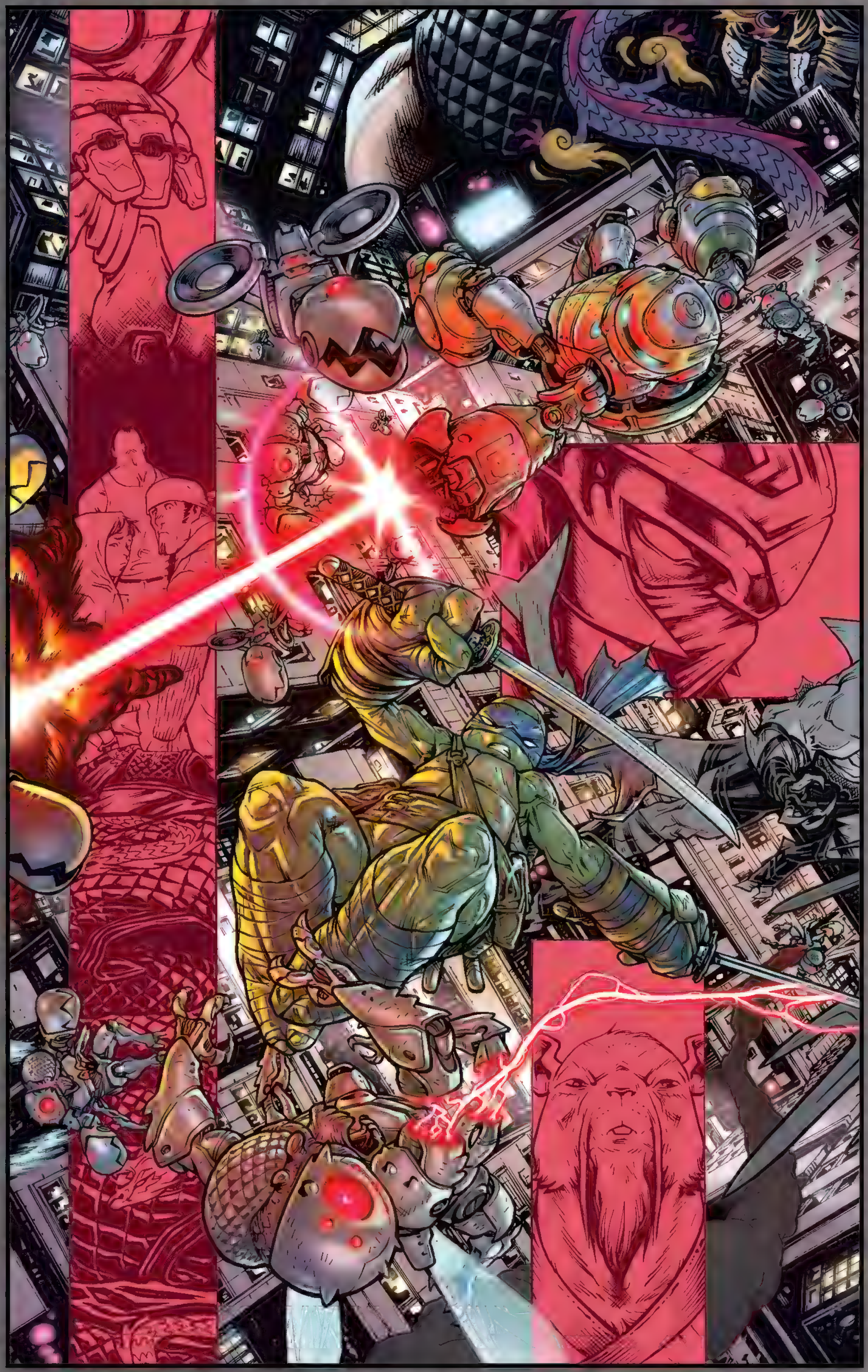
KILL THE RAT.

KILL THE RAT.

KILL THE RAT.

KILL THE RAT.

art by KEVIN EASTMAN
colors by RONDA PATTISON



ISSUE #48

art by MATEUS SANTOLOUCO

MY SONS...

... DEFEND YOURSELVES!

KILL THE RAT!

KILL THE R—

FWOK

HIYAH!

"Y'KNOW, LEO, SENSEI KEEPS TELLIN' US TO PROTECT *OURSELVES*..."

THOK

...WHEN I'M PRETTY SURE WE'RE THE *LEAST* OF THESE FLYDORKS' WORRIES.

MAYBE. BUT WE *DO* HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT KEEPING DONNIE SAFE.

AND I THINK I KNOW HOW.

FATHER, YOU NEED TO *FALL BACK* TO THE BASEMENT!

BUT DONATELLO IS *DEFENSELESS*.

THAT'S *EXACTLY* WHY YOU NEED TO GO WITH RAPH. *NOW!*

C'MON, SENSEI, IT'LL BE OKAY. I KNOW THAT *LOOK* ON LEO'S FACE—

—HE'S GOT A *PLAN*.

YES... YES, I THINK YOU'RE *RIGHT*, RAPHAEL.

HYAH!
KILL THE RAT!
WHAT ABOUT *US*, LEO?!
KILL THE RAT!
UFF!
WHUMP
YOU *OKAY*, DUDE?
YEAH... *ERF*... YEAH, GOOD TO GO.
SO, WHAT NOW?
NOW *I'M* GOING TO GO HELP WITH THOSE DAMN BUGS.
I *GOT* THIS. NO *PROBLEMO*.
I *KNOW* YOU DO.
WE'LL GET BACK HERE *AS SOON* AS WE CAN, PROMISE.
YOU'RE GONNA STAY HERE AND KEEP AN EYE ON DONNIE.
OKAY, LITTLE BRO?
UH, YEAH, LEO... SURE. I... I...

YOU'LL BE OKAY WITH *ME*, BRO. DON'T WORRY.

I'M NOT WORRIED, MIKEY.

WHOWHAHUH?!

AT LEAST NOT ABOUT ME.

WHERE'S EVERYONE ELSE?

MIKEY, WHERE IS EVERYONE?

DOWNSTAIRS. LEO WAS TRYIN' TO GET SOME FLYBORGS *AWAY* FROM YOUR BOD—ER, FROM YOU.

CRAP, ROBO-BRO, DON'T *DO* THAT! YOU TOTALLY GAVE ME A HEART ATTACK.

WELL, IT LOOKS LIKE IT WORKED. NOW WE GOTTA GO HELP THEM.

BUT LEO SAID TO *STAY* WITH—

MY BODY WILL BE FINE, MIKE. BUT BASED ON MY READINGS, THE OTHERS MIGHT NOT.

KIRBYFAN_01, THIS IS DUZ_MACHINES_84. I'M TRANSMITTING SOME COORDINATES YOUR WAY.

I NEED YOU TO REMOTE TELEPORT MY BODY TO BURNOW ISLAND.

GOT THEM, DUZ_MACHINES_84...

...JUST NEED A SECOND TO *LOCK THEM* IN WITH FUGITOID.

AND... *BINGO!*

Enter

CLICK

WHOA. COOL.

WHOOM

FUGITOID...

...THE PACKAGE IS INBOUND TO YOU.

WHOOM

AND IT HAS ARRIVED SAFELY...

...NOW, PLEASE FOCUS YOUR EFFORTS ON PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY, MY FRIEND.

ROGER THAT, PROFESSOR.

SPEAKING OF, DO ME A SOLID, KIRBYFAN, AND FORWARD THOSE SAME COORDINATES TO NOBODY, PLEASE.

AND TELL HER *WHAT?*

TELL HER...

"...WE'RE GONNA NEED ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET!"

YEAH, KIRBYFAN, I *GOT* THE COORDINATES. ALREADY LOCKED 'EM INTO THE SUIT'S GPS.

DID DON—ER, DUZ_MACHINES GIVE YOU *ANY MORE* INFO?

ONLY THAT HE NEEDED YOU THERE *YESTERDAY.*

WHAT'S GOING ON, ANGEL?

THAT WAS HAROLD. THE TURTLES FOUND THEMSELVES SOME *NEW TROUBLE* ALREADY.

TROUBLE? WHAT KIND?

SAME AS ALWAYS— THE KIND THAT NEEDS *OUR* HELP.

LET'S ROLL.

LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE GONNA GET TO SEE YOUR "FRIEND" *SOONER* THAN EXPECTED.

"DO YOU *SEE* THAT?!"

POLICE

UP THERE!

I THINK... I THINK THAT'S THE SAME FOX I TOLD YOU ABOUT *EARLIER*, DETECTIVE LEWIS!*

YEAH. YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT.

* SEE TMNT #47 -- B.C.

HOW CAN YOU JUST *SIT* THERE LIKE NOTHING? YOU *ARE* SEEING WHAT *I'M* SEEING, AREN'T YOU?

LOOK, I SPENT TWO YEARS *DEEP UNDERCOVER*, JOHNSON. AFTER EVERYTHING I SAW DURING THAT TIME, *NOTHING* SURPRISES ME ANYMORE.

'SIDES, MY *BIGGEST CONCERN* RIGHT NOW IS IN THE *BACK* OF THIS TRUCK.

"LET'S GET THAT BASTARD *HUN* LOCKED UP DOWNTOWN AND THEN YOU AND I CAN TALK ABOUT THIS CITY'S CRAZY LITTLE SECRETS *ALL* YOU WANT."

YOU SAY SO, BOSS.

BUT I DON'T THINK THIS TRAFFIC'S GONNA CLEAR UP *ANY TIME* SOO—

SHABOOM

BOOM

OH... MAN. JOHNSON... YOU OKAY?

YEAH... YEAH, I THINK SO. BUT...

...WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED?

OH... CRAP.

GET 'IM *OUTTA* THERE, HERMAN. *MOVE!*

ROGER THAT, SIR!

SCHRIPP

WHAT THE—

STAY STILL, SIR...

SNAP

...I DON'T WANT TO *WOUND* YOU BY MISTAKE.

SO... WASN'T EXPECTIN' *THIS.*

I AIN'T TRYIN' TO LOOK A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH OR NOTHIN', BUT WHAT'S YOUR *PLAY*, CAT?

MY PLAY IS I'M *BUSTIN' YOU OUT* SO YOU CAN HELP *BUST ME IN.*

IN WHERE?

WHERE ELSE?

"IN WITH THE *HUMANS.*"

FREEZE, FREAKS!

DROP *SMOKE*, HERMAN!

SIR, YES, SIR!

OH =KOFF= YOU GOTTA BE =KOFF= KIDDING!

C'MON!

LET'S GET *GONE!*

I... UH...

AW, WHAT THE HELL?

VRRMMM

DAMMIT!

BLAM BLAM BLAM

INCOMING SMALL ARMS FIRE!

Ping

Ping

SO, YOU LOSE THE *REST* OF YOUR CRITTER CREW, HOB?

NOT FOR LONG.

NO. WE'LL SEE 'EM *SOON* ENOUGH.

YOU KNOW THAT BIG TURTLE OF YOURS *HATES* MY GUTS, RIGHT?

HE AIN'T GONNA BE *HAPPY* 'BOUT THIS.

WHY DO YOU THINK I DIDN'T *BRING* HIM?

WE'RE JUST GONNA HAVE TO *CROSS THAT BRIDGE* WHEN WE GET TO IT.

OKAY, I'M NOT GONNA LIE...

...*THAT* SURPRISED ME.

"<I DID NOT *EXPECT* THIS...>"

<... I MUST ADMIT.>

<WHAT ARE YOU *SPEAKING* OF, KITSUNE?>

<THIS...>

<...THE *GAIJIN* YOU HAVE *INVITED* INTO OUR MIDST.>

<AND "INVITED" IS *PRECISELY* THE STATUS HE HOLDS.>

<THE SCIENTIST IS ONLY HERE BECAUSE I AM *ALLOWING* HIM. A MEANS TO AN END.>

<WHEN THAT END COMES, SO, TOO, WILL HIS INVITATION.>

<AND WHAT *END* IS THAT, SAKI?>

<HAMATO YOSHI'S END, OF COURSE.>

<AND WHAT OF YOUR *CHUNIN*?>

<KARAI?>

"<WHAT OF HER?>"

<SHE DOES NOT AGREE WITH UTILIZING *OUTSIDERS* TO SERVE VENGEANCE FOR THE FOOT CLAN.>

<THE FOOT CLAN? THIS VENGEANCE IS *MINE* AND *MINE ALONE*.>

<WHEN THIS IS DONE, I WILL REMIND THAT PETULANT CHILD OF HER *PROPER* PLACE.>

<NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME.>

<OF COURSE...>

<...BELOVED.>

TELL ME, SCIENTIST, DO YOU MAINTAIN *FULL CONTROL?* ARE YOUR MACHINES DOING AS I ORDERED?

THEY ARE DOING AS I *DESIGNED*, SHREDDER...

...AND, YES, I AM *STILL* IN CHARGE.

THEN TELL ME— WHAT DO YOU SEE?

I SEE...

"...A FILTHY RODENT ON THE RUN."

MY SONS, QUICKLY! TO ME!

FORM A *DEFENSIVE CIRCLE!*

WE CANNOT ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE *SURROUNDED!*

GET READY. HERE THEY *COME* AGAIN.

KILL THEIR—

FWOOSH

FZZAK

WHAT THE—?

GOOD PLAN GETTING EVERYONE DOWN HERE, LEO...

FWUDD

...BUT THESE TWO WERE JUST PROBING OUR DEFENSES.

"THERE'S A LOT MORE WHERE THEY CAME FROM."

WE NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE, STAT.

BUT, MY SON, YOUR BODY—

IS SAFE, FATHER. WE WON'T BE IF WE DON'T GET MOVING.

LOOKS LIKE IT'S TIME FOR A *SWIM*.

OH... FRIGGIN' GREAT.

DON'T BE A *BABY*, RAPH—IT'S JUST A LITTLE WATER.

YEAH... YOU JUST KEEP *TELLIN' YOURSELF* THAT, MIKE.

SPLASH

WAIT A SEC, FATHER.

TIK

TIK

TIK

WWRRRRRRR

FWIK

FWIP FWIP FWIP FWIP FWIP FWIP

ALL ABOARD.

MAN, I DEFINITELY DIDN'T HAVE A *BATH* ON THE SCHEDULE TODAY.

ALL'S I KNOW IS I'M GONNA NEED A BATH *AFTER* THIS BATH.

PTOO!

HOLD THAT THOUGHT, RAPH...

...THEY FOUND US!

KILL THE RAT!

INCOMING!

THEY ARE *ALL AROUND* US!

WE MUST GET TO THE SHORE, MY SONS!

FZZT

PWP

KRAK

YEAH... SURE. BUT *WHERE THE HELL'S* THE SHORE?

WHA—

RAPH!

THEY PULLED HIM UND—

GAH!

DONNIE! THEY'RE TRYING TO *SPLIT US UP* AND PULL US *OUT* OF THE BATTLE...

"...YOU NEED TO *PROTECT FATHER!*"

WAY AHEAD OF YOU!

SHKKT

I DO NOT LIKE *ABANDONING* YOUR BROTHERS LIKE THIS, DONATELLO!

ME, EITHER, FATHER, BUT LIKE YOU SAID...

"...WE'RE NO GOOD TO THEM IN THE WATER."

"IF WE'RE GONNA FLY LIKE THIS, DUDE..."

...WE PROBABLY SHOULD HAVE A *PROPELLER.*

FWAK

BUT WATCH OUT FOR *TURBULENCE!*

SPLASH

FWAAH!

AND THE SOUTH KOREAN JUDGE TOTALLY SCORES THAT A *PERFECT 10,* FOLKS!

"YOUR BROTHERS HAVE MADE IT TO THE *SHORE,* DONATELLO..."

...THEY ARE *SAFE.*

THAT'S GOOD, FATHER—

KILL THE RAT!

—I WISH I COULD SAY THE SAME FOR US.

ZZZAX

WISH GRANTED!

NOBODY! ALOPEX!

MAN, AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU TWO!

LET'S HOPE YOU *STAY* THAT WAY—THERE'S A *TON* OF THESE THINGS!

DONNIE, IF *YOU GUYS* ARE UP HERE...

"...WHERE THE HECK ARE THE *OTHERS?*"

COME ON, GUYS—JUST A *LITTLE* FARTHER.

NOTHIN' LITTLE ABOUT *TODAY*, BRO.

DUDES! LOOK *WHO'S* HERE!

ABOUT TIME, BOYS.

YEAH, DID YOU THINK THESE THINGS WERE JUST GOING TO *DROP DEAD* ON THEIR OWN?

SPEAKING OF DEAD, I'D REALLY NOT LIKE TO TAKE THAT TRIP AGAIN ANY TIME SOON.

AS BEFORE—A *DEFENSIVE CIRCLE.*

DON'T LET THEM *SURROUND* US.

WE FIGHT *TOGETHER.*

WE *DON'T QUIT* 'TILL THEY'RE HISTORY.

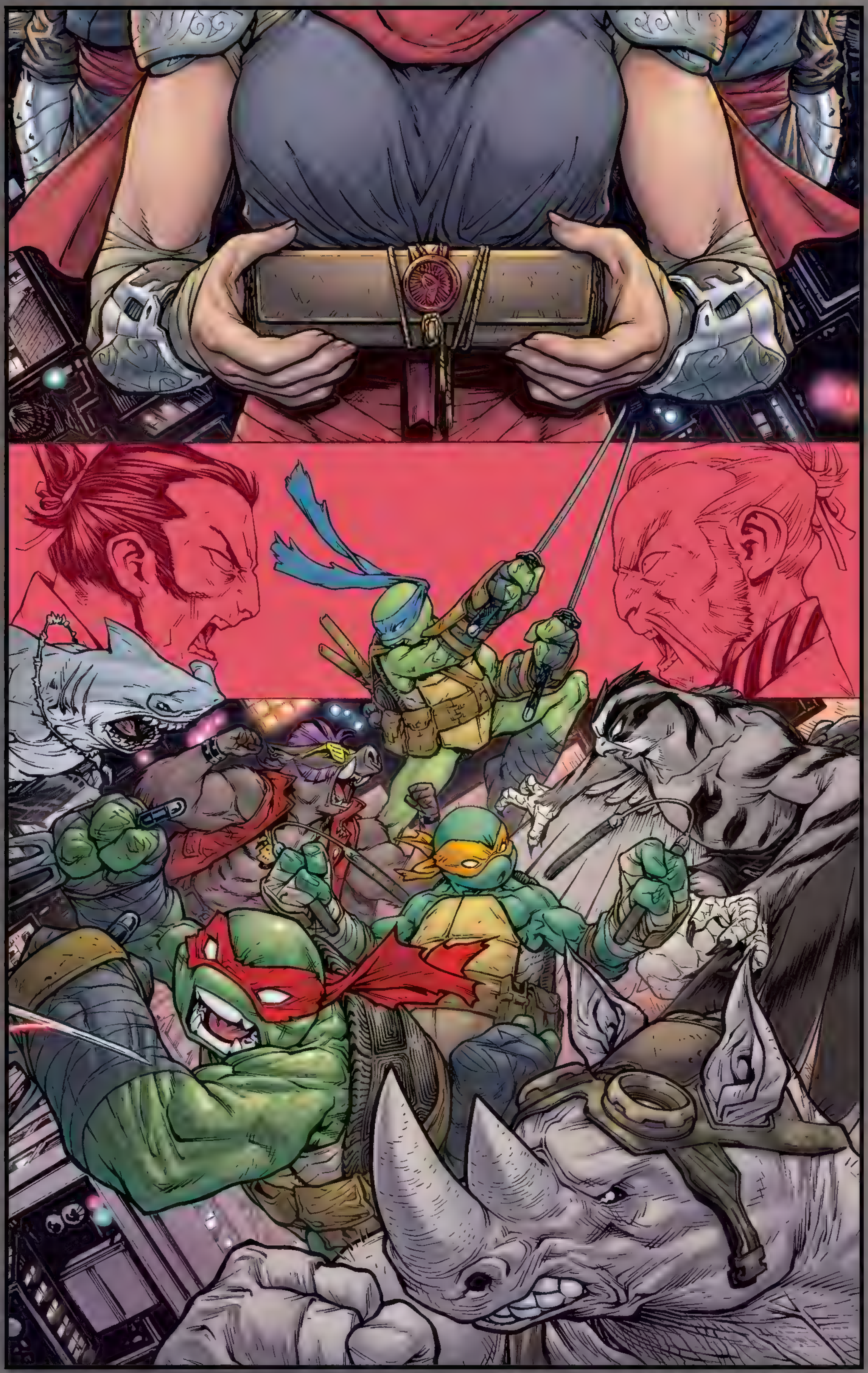
THAT MAY BE A WHILE.

MAN... WHEN IT RAINS, IT POURS.

UH, DONNIE, YOU THINK HAROLD HAS MORE *ROBOTS* LIKE YOU LYING AROUND?

'CAUSE I'M THINKIN' WE'RE *ALL* GONNA NEED ONE OF OUR OWN SOON.

art by KEVIN EASTMAN
colors by RONDA PATTISON



ISSUE #48

art by MATEUS SANTOLOUCO

LOOK AT *THEM*, BLUDGEON...

KONK

"...DISGUSTING."

BWAHA! NAILED THAT CAT ***RIGHT*** ON THE NOGGIN WITH AN ANVIL!

MAN, I WISH *I* HAD AN ANVIL!

HOW DO THOSE FOOLS ***LIVE*** WITH THEMSELVES?

I DON'T KNOW, KOYA.

IGNORANCE IS ***BLISS***, I SUPPOSE.

BUT DON'T THEY UNDERSTAND HOW IMPORTANT TODAY IS? WE THOUGHT OUR MASTER DEAD BUT WE WERE ***WRONG***.

NOW WE HAVE A CHANCE AT ***RETRIBUTION*** FOR FAILING TO PROTECT HIM FROM HIS ENEMIES.

HOW DO THEY NOT ***SEE*** THAT?!

FORGET THOSE IMBECILES, SISTER. ***ALL*** THAT MATTERS IS THE MASTER'S PROMISE THAT YOU AND I WILL REMAIN PART OF HIS GRAND PLANS. WE ARE ***STILL*** HIS SOLDIERS!

WHAT DO YOU THINK OUR ***MISSION*** WILL BE, BLUDGEON?

WHO'S TO SAY? ALL I KNOW IS, WITH MASTER SHREDDER BACK IN COMMAND...

"...IT WILL BE *GLORIOUS.*"

SO, STOCKMAN... HOW *GOES* THE SLAUGHTER?

EVERYTHING IS GOING TO PLAN, SHREDDER, *JUST* AS I GUARANTEED.

I CERTAINLY DIDN'T NEED ANY *ASSISTANCE* FROM YOUR LACKEYS.

MY... LACKEYS?

THE *BLASTED NINJAS* YOU DECIDED TO ORDER INTO THE FIGHT *WITHOUT* CONSULTING ME!

I GAVE *NO SUCH* ORDER. WHO WOULD—

KARAI!

"WHERE *IS* THAT DAMNED GIRL?!"

OKAAAYYY...

...NOW I'M *TOTALLY CONFUSED*, GUYS.

IT IS *SIMPLE*, TURTLE...

...YOU *DO NOT* DESERVE DEATH BY THESE MACHINES. NOT IN THE NAME OF THE FOOT CLAN.

OROKU KARAI—WHAT IS THE *MEANING* OF THIS?

LOWER YOUR WEAPONS AND I WILL EXPLAIN.

YEAH. RIGHT. YOU MUST THINK WE'RE PRETTY STUPID.

WILL YOU *HEAR* ME FIRST, HAMATO YOSHI?

YES, I WILL HEAR YOU. LOWER YOUR WEAPONS, MY CHILDREN.

BUT—

PLEASE, RAPHAEL, *DO* AS I SAY.

I AM *LISTENING*, OROKU KARAI.

UNDERSTAND, WHAT HAS HAPPENED HERE TODAY WAS *NOT* OUT OF MERCY OR COMPASSION.

MY MASTER WISHES YOU *DESTROYED*, AND AS HIS *CHUNIN*, I WILL SEE HIS ORDERS THROUGH TO COMPLETION.

BUT I COULD NOT STAND BY AND ALLOW IT TO HAPPEN SO...

...*DISHONORABLY.*

SO NOW WE CAN FINISH THIS IN THE *PROPER* MANNER—AS TRUE WARRIORS.

HM. INDEED.

BUT FIRST I WOULD ASK THAT *YOU* HEAR *ME.*

YOU SPEAK OF HONOR AND *YET* YOU ARE PREPARED TO ANNIHILATE A SMALL FEW WITH A GREAT MANY.

WITH SUCH UNEVEN NUMBERS, WHAT YOU CALL THE WARRIOR'S WAY WOULD BE AS *UNJUST* AS ALLOWING THE MACHINES TO CONTINUE THEIR ATTACK.

BUT IF IT IS *TRULY* HONOR THAT YOU SEEK, THERE IS ANOTHER WAY, OROKU KARAI—YOU *KNOW* THIS. A JUST AND HONORABLE WAY... STEEL AGAINST STEEL.

THE FOOT WAY.

FURTHERMORE, IF IT'S *RETRIBUTION* OROKU SAKI DESIRES, THEN, AS HIS *CHUNIN*...

...IT IS *YOUR* DUTY TO ENSURE HE DOES SO IN A WAY *WORTHY* OF ONE WHO CALLS HIMSELF MASTER.

"WHAT ARE YOU *WAITING* FOR?"

BURNOW ISLAND.

IT'S NOT LIKE WE'VE GOT *ALL NIGHT*...

...LET ALONE *ALL MINUTE*. YOU'VE GOT THE NEW SHELL BUILT, SO... *GET ON WITH IT!*

I... I WANT TO, HAROLD, BUT...

...BUT I'M FINDING THE MORAL RAMIFICATIONS FAR MORE COMPLICATED THAN I'D ANTICIPATED.

COMPLICATED? YOU'RE FIXING OUR *FRIEND*, HONEYCUTT—

—THERE'S *NOTHING* COMPLICATED ABOUT THAT.

IT MAY APPEAR THAT WAY FROM WHERE YOU'RE SITTING, HAROLD, BUT I ASSURE YOU IT'S QUITE DIFFERENT HERE.

YES, FUSING THE ARTIFICIAL SHELL TO DONATELLO'S BODY IS A FAIRLY SIMPLE PROCESS, BUT THE UTROMINON OOZE REQUIRED TO MEND HIS INTERNAL WOUNDS, WELL...

...WE DON'T HAVE AN AMOUNT SUFFICIENT ENOUGH TO FIX OUR FRIEND WITHOUT RISKING IRREPARABLE HARM TO THE UTROMS IN STASIS.

I WANT VERY MUCH TO HELP DONATELLO, HAROLD...

...I JUST DON'T THINK I'M CAPABLE OF CREATING MORE **INNOCENT VICTIMS** IN THIS WAR.

WELL, I CAN *HELP* YOU WITH THAT PARTICULAR CONUNDRUM...

WHO?!

...IF YOU'D BE WILLING TO HELP *ME* WITH ONE OF MY OWN.

YOU HAVE GOT TO BE...

...KIDDING ME!

IS THIS SOME KIND OF A *JOKE*, NINJA?!

LET *ME* DO ALL THE HARD WORK CORRALLING THOSE DAMNED MUTANTS JUST SO *YOUR* PAJAMA-WEARING PSYCHOS CAN TAKE *ALL* THE CREDIT FOR FINISHING THE JOB?

WHAT ARE YOU *SAYING*, STOCKMAN?

YOUR *NINJAS*, YOU SPIKE-HEADED FOOL! THEY *DESTROYED* MY ROBOTS BEFORE I COULD *EXTERMINATE* THE RAT AND HIS BROOD!

HEAR ME NOW, STOCKMAN. WHATEVER HAS HAPPENED, YOU WOULD DO WELL TO *CONTROL* YOUR TONGUE.

YES, GAIJIN...

FOOSH

GAHH!

ZZAXX

...YOU WOULD.

WHA... MY EQUIPMENT!

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE, GIRL?

ANSWER ME!

I HAVE ELIMINATED A DIRE THREAT TO OUR CLAN, MASTER SHREDDER.

WAIT, SAKI!

IF YOU STRIKE DOWN THIS CHILD NOW, DO YOU ACT ANY LESS RASHLY THAN SHE?

KITSUNE, I—

YOU ARE THE MASTER OF THE FOOT CLAN.

WILL YOU NOT HEAR YOUR CHUNIN'S TESTIMONY BEFORE YOU DELIVER YOUR SENTENCE?

VERY WELL—STAND AND BE HEARD.

I WILL SPEAK, MASTER, AND IF THEY ARE TO BE MY *FINAL WORDS*, I WILL DIE KNOWING I SPOKE THEM HONORABLY.

MY SOLE WISH IS THAT, IN DYING, MY BLOOD WILL *ONCE AGAIN* SERVE TO RESURRECT THE FOOT TO ITS FULL GLORY.

A GLORY WROUGHT BY *YOU*, GRANDFATHER, IN AN AGE THAT HAS PASSED INTO SHADOW.

AND NOW, IN THIS NEW AGE, WHEN OUR PRECIOUS CLAN SHOULD SHINE BRIGHTER THAN IT *EVER* HAS BEFORE, IT IS INSTEAD IN DANGER OF *FALLING BACK* INTO DARK OBLIVION AS OUR CONTROL UNRAVELS AND OUR EMPIRE SLIPS AWAY.

OUR ARMY WAS NEARLY *DECIMATED* BY THE ILL-FATED ATTACK ON BURNOW ISLAND, AND THE OUTSIDERS—THE COWARDLY *GAIJIN*—WE HAVE ALLOWED TO POISON OUR RANKS SEE THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO *ABANDON* THEIR SO-CALLED LOYALTIES TO OUR CLAN.

AND YET WE *CONTINUE* TO ALLY OURSELVES WITH MEN OF NO MORALS AND NO TRADITIONS LIKE THE SCIENTIST. AND FOR *WHAT* REASON?

ALL TO SETTLE AN *ANCIENT DISPUTE*—

—A PERSONAL FEUD THAT THREATENS TO DISMANTLE *ALL* YOU HAVE SO METICULOUSLY BUILT OVER THESE MANY CENTURIES, GRANDFATHER.

I FULLY UNDERSTAND WHY YOU WOULD POSSESS SUCH A *BURNING DESIRE* FOR FINAL RETRIBUTION.

BUT WHAT WOULD *TRULY* BE GAINED IF WE LOSE OUR *COLLECTIVE HONOR* IN THE PROCESS?

THEREFORE, IT IS MY SWORN DUTY AS FOOT CLAN *CHUNIN* TO HELP MY MASTER SEE THE *TRUE PATH* FORWARD... NO MATTER THE COST.

THERE IS A *BETTER WAY*, MASTER.

YOUR *CHUNIN* SPEAKS THE *TRUTH*, SAKI...

...IT IS *FAR PAST TIME* WE RESOLVE THIS WAR BETWEEN US.

I, HAMATO YOSHI, FORMALLY CHALLENGE YOU, OROKU SAKI, TO *THE GAUNTLET.*

ABSURD.

I WILL NOT *SULLY* MYSELF WITH SUCH NONSENSE.

FOOT! SLAUGHTER THEM AL—

WAIT!

MY BELOVED... WAIT.

THERE IS *WISDOM* IN THESE WORDS. AND *OPPORTUNITY.*

THE GAUNTLET IS ANCIENT AND SACRED. IT IS *NOT* A PATH TO BE UNDERTAKEN LIGHTLY.

BUT IF YOU CHOOSE TO FOLLOW IT, YOU WILL *PROVE* THAT YOUR RULE IS *ABSOLUTE* AND *ABOVE REPROACH*. THE TIME FOR PLOTS IS OVER. THE TIME FOR COMBAT IS NOW.

BECOME THE GREAT *RULER* YOU WERE *ALWAYS* DESTINED TO BE. ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE.

AFTER ALL, WHAT DOES THE *GREAT DRAGON WARRIOR* HAVE TO FEAR? A DECREPIT RAT AND HIS REPTILIAN CHILDREN?

VERY WELL, HAMATO YOSHI... LET YOUR SECOND DEATH AT LONG LAST SEAL YOUR PLACE AS *TRAITOR* TO THE FOOT CLAN.

I *ACCEPT* YOUR CHALLENGE.

YES, WELL, DON'T MIND ME...

...I'LL JUST SEE *MYSELF* OUT.

IDIOTS.

"THEY'RE GONNA GET *KILLED!*"

WE CAN'T JUST STAND AROUND DOIN' *NOTHIN'*.

NO, ANGEL, THEY'LL KILL US *ALL* IF WE INTERFERE.

ALOPEX SPEAKS THE *TRUTH*...

...THE RITUAL DEMANDS *STRICT ADHERENCE* TO ITS CONVENTIONS.

RITUAL?

YES.

"IT BEGINS WITH TWO WARRIOR FAMILIES LOCKED IN *IRRECONCILABLE* CONFLICT...

"...LEAVING A SACRED TRIAL BY COMBAT AS THE *ONLY* HONORABLE RESOLUTION.

"THE RITE COMMENCES WITH THE *SUBORDINATES*—STUDENTS AND SOLDIERS SPECIALLY CHOSEN BY THEIR MASTER.

"FOUR TO A SIDE, THEY WILL BATTLE IN THEIR MASTER'S NAME, CEASING ONLY AFTER *ALL* WARRIORS FROM ONE GROUP HAVE BEEN DEFEATED.

"THE REMAINING VICTORS WILL THEN HAVE EARNED THE HONOR TO *STAND* AT THEIR MASTER'S SIDE.

"JOINING HIM IN BATTLE AGAINST HIS ADVERSARY—A *DECISIVE FINAL ENCOUNTER* THAT WILL SETTLE THEIR FAMILY DISPUTE FOR ALL TIME."

A BINDING COVENANT *SIGNED IN BLOOD*...

"...AND SEALED IN DEATH."

MAN, I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!

THE OBJECT OF THIS THING IS TO ACTUALLY *KILL* EACH OTHER?!

NO, MY SON. ONLY *SAKI* OR *I* MUST DIE TODAY.

FATHER, WHY IN THE WORLD DID YOU *AGREE* TO THIS?

WE HAVE SPOKEN OF THIS BEFORE, MY SON. SAKI WILL *NEVER* CEASE IN HIS QUEST TO SEE OUR FAMILY ANNIHILATED. HE WILL *HUNT* US TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH IF NEED BE.*

TODAY THE INEVITABLE HAS BECOME REALITY AND WE MUST *ALL* MAKE DIFFICULT CHOICES.

BUT... I DON'T THINK I CAN *DO* IT. KILL SOMEONE, I MEAN. EVEN SHREDDER.

THEN UNDERSTAND, YOU WILL NEVER KNOW *PEACE* UNTIL EITHER HE... OR I... NO LONGER EXISTS.

*See TMNT #14 - B.C

PLEASE KNOW, I DO NOT WANT TO *DIE*, MICHELANGELO. BUT MORE THAN THAT, I DO NOT WANT MY CHILDREN TO *LIVE* IN CONSTANT DANGER.

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, THE GAUNTLET WILL *REMOVE* SHREDDER'S DARK SHADOW FROM YOUR LIVES.

FATHER...

"...IT'S *STARTING*."

CLAN HAMATO! YOU HAVE ISSUED THE *CHALLENGE* TO OUR MASTER. YOU STAND AS *WILLING PARTICIPANTS* IN THIS ANCIENT RITE.

CLAN FOOT! ARE YOU PREPARED TO PROVE THE *RIGHTEOUSNESS* OF YOUR CAUSE IN MORTAL COMBAT?

YES.

VERY WELL...

...LET THE *GAUNTLET COMMENCE!*

STAND *PROUD*, CHOSEN ONES.

TODAY *WE* FIGHT FOR OUR *MASTER'S* HONOR.

NO, KARAI... *YOU* WILL NOT.

YOU WILL *WATCH* THE OTHERS BATTLE IN MY NAME AS YOU AWAIT YOUR *OWN* PUNISHMENT.

BUT... GRANDFATHER...

DO NOT THINK BECAUSE I HAVE AGREED TO THIS SPECTACLE THAT I HAVE *FORGIVEN* YOUR INSUBORDINATION, GIRL. I WILL DEAL WITH YOSHI...

"...THEN I WILL DEAL WITH *YOU*."

OH, MAN.

MY SON, I SENSE *DISCORD* IN THEIR RANKS. THEY ARE NOT A *COHESIVE* UNIT LIKE YOU AND YOUR BROTHERS.

YES, THEY ARE MUCH BIGGER, MUCH STRONGER—

—BUT YOU HAVE TRAINING, DISCIPLINE, INTELLIGENCE... FRATERNITY. YOU MUST USE THESE ASSETS TO YOUR *ADVANTAGE* AT ALL TIMES IN THE FIGHT TO COME.

YES, SENSEI.

SPEAKIN' OF FIGHTIN', *ENOUGH* OF THIS BOWIN' AND TALKIN' CRAP.

IF WE'RE GONNA DO THIS...

...LET'S DO IT!

WHAT'S WRONG, TURTLE?

IN A HURRY TO GET *YOUR* SHELL SMASHED, TOO?

YEAH, I'M IN A *HURRY*, DIPWAD.

FOR SOME SERIOUS *PAYBACK!*

WHOP

SLAM

DO YOU *REALLY* BELIEVE YOU CAN HIT ME WITH YOUR COWARDLY LASERS, PITIFUL MACHINE?

SHK

'CAUSE YOU SURE DO TALK A LOT.

YOU SURE YOU DON'T HAVE SOME PARROT IN YOU, KOYA?

ALLEY OOP!
MIKEY, A LITTLE *HELP* HERE?
GRAHH!
JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS *SAFE* TO GO BACK INTO THE GAUNTLET!
CHOKK
THANKS, LITTLE BRO.
CHECK IT OUT— SHARK TOOTH. COOL.
LEONARDO, QUICKLY!
PRESS YOUR ATTACK!
"BEFORE YOUR ENEMY *RECOVERS!*"
I THINK NOT!
YOU DARE *MOCK* ME, ROBOT?
WHOA!
RAPH! LOOK OU—

WHAM

EXCELLENT, KOYA.

HYAH!

OH, WAIT— I DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS *TICKLE* TIME.

TICKLE, TICKLE!

KRAK

LEO!

FWAPP

BLASTED TURTLE *BROKE* MY TOOTH.

AND YET ENOUGH REMAIN FOR THE *FLESH FEAST* TO COME, BROTHER.

MAN, KOYA— YOU'RE NASTY!

HEH. IF YOU THINK *THAT'S* NASTY, BOPSTER...

...JUST *WAIT* 'TILL YOU SEE WHAT COMES NEXT.

"THIS IS BAD!"

WE'VE GOTTA *DO* SOMETHIN'!

NO! *ANGEL!*

WHOA.

I *TOLD* YOU—WE *CAN'T* GET INVOLVED.

BUT—

NO BUTS.

WE HAVE TO LET THIS FINISH *WITHOUT* US.

YES, LITTLE FOX, YOU *DO*.

BUT KNOW THIS—NO MATTER *HOW* THIS FINISHES, *YOU* WILL BE SAFE, AT HOME...

WHA—

...WITH *ME*.

art by KEVIN EASTMAN
colors by RONDA PATTISON

CASEY & APRIL #1

art by IRENE KOH

HOLLAND TUNNEL
STAY IN LANE
POLICE STILL LOOKING FOR SUSPECTS IN RELATION TO A GRUESOME MURDER IN A CAMPUS PARKING LOT THIS PAST WEEK. A PUBLIC SPOKESPERSON STATED THAT THE...
TITANS DESTROYED THE SAINTS LAST NIGHT WITH A CRUSHING LAST MINUTE DRIVE AS CROWDS CHEERED...
ON THE ROAD AGAIN...
IT'S FUNNY.
DOESN'T IT FEEL LIKE WE SHOULD BE ON VACATION OR SOMETHING?
UH. I GUESS.

WE CAN DO THIS, RIGHT?

TRACK DOWN EVIDENCE OF WARRING IMMORTAL CREATURES WHO DISAPPEARED AGES AGO?

YEAH, I THINK WE CAN HANDLE IT.

IT FEELS DIFFERENT. WITH JUST US.

WE'LL BE *FINE.*

AREN'T THERE STUDIES ON COUPLES THAT WORK TOGETHER...?

COUPLES.

WHAT?

"COUPLES." SOUNDS LIKE "OLD COUPLES."

OH.

YOU WANT ME TO TAKE A TURN DRIVING?

SURE.

WHAT DOES THE PANTHEON HAVE TO DO WITH THE DESERT?

THERE'S TEXT IN THE SCROLL REFERRING TO A BRIDGE, WHICH THE PROFESSOR THOUGHT REFERRED TO THE BERINGIA, WHICH WAS A ROUTE BETWEEN ASIA AND NORTHWESTERN AMERICA 20,000 YEARS AGO.

PLUS, I WAS TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AND I NOTICED THIS.

WHAT ABOUT IT?

I THINK THEY'RE YUCCA BREVIFOLIA. JOSHUA TREES.

WHICH MEANS THE MOJAVE DESERT.

CACTUS.

WELL. YUCCA.

ISN'T THIS WHOLE CHUNK OF CALIFORNIA SUPPOSED TO FALL INTO THE OCEAN? EVENTUALLY?

YOU MEAN THE SAN ANDREAS FAULT?

UM. THAT'S NOT EXACTLY HERE.

ACTUALLY IT'S MORE LIKE EVENTUALLY SAN FRANCISCO AND LOS ANGELES WILL BE NEIGHBORS.

JUST A LITTLE PIECE OF GEOGRAPHICAL 411 FOR YOU. *UH.* ANYWAY.

I COULD EAT WHENEVER.

I REMEMBER WHEN I WAS A KID MY PARENTS TOOK ME TO THE GRAND CANYON.

EVERY NIGHT I WOULD GO STAND OUTSIDE AND LOOK AT THE STARS.

I HAD THIS NOTEBOOK...

"...I KEPT ALL MY CONSTELLATION CHARTS IN IT."

MY DAD WOULD CORRECT THEM OVER BREAKFAST.

HUH.

HEY, IF YOU'RE GOING TO DRAW ORION'S BELT, YOU MIGHT AS WELL GET IT RIGHT.

GOOD FAMILY TIMES. DID I EVER T—

CRAP!

MAN.

THIS PLACE IS NUTS.

"FIRST TIME I SAW A STAR...

"...I WAS LIKE, 12. MAYBE. I WAS HIDING OUT ON THIS ROOF TO GET AWAY FROM THE OLD MAN. AND THIS ONE NIGHT I LOOKED UP AND I SAW... YOU KNOW, STARS.

"BUT THEY WERE MOVING."

TURNS OUT THEY WERE PLANES. I JUST NEVER NOTICED, YOU KNOW, THE SKY BEFORE.

AW! THAT'S SO SWEET.

YEAH, SURE, SWEET.

DO YOU EVER WONDER WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE IF WE'D KNOWN EACH OTHER AS LITTLE KIDS?

ME AND YOU AS KIDS IS LIKE NEW YORK AND CALIFORNIA.

DIFFERENT WORLDS.

"DIFFERENT PLANETS."

CLOSED

LUNCH?

YES. UH. PLEASE.

WELL THEN. TAKE A SEAT ALREADY.

YOU GUYS WANT COFFEE?

YES.

NO WORD FROM THE GUYS. MAYBE NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS?

IS IT?

DOESN'T FEEL LIKE THAT'S EVER TRUE.

YEAH, I GUESS NOT.

YOU GUYS FROM NEW YORK OR SOMETHING?

HA. YEAH. IS IT OBVIOUS?

YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE YOU'RE FROM HERE.

YOU LIKE LIVING IN NEW YORK?

SURE. I MEAN, IT'S SUPER PRETTY HERE, THOUGH.

THAT'S NICE OF YOU. THIS PLACE IS A HOLE.

HEY! YOU THINK WE COULD GET A LITTLE SERVICE?

I DON'T MEAN TO INTERRUPT.

CITY PUNKS.

DON'T START ANYTHING.

CASEY?

CASEY.

LIKE THE KID IN THE SONG.

HEY! WHAT'S THE NAME OF THAT SONG? ABOUT THE LITTLE KID AND HIS TRAIN? YOU KNOW THAT SONG, BOY?

KIDS

Special

TURTLE SOUP

TURTLE PIE

JED.

tip!

HEY, I'M JUST TRYING TO ASK A BOY HERE ABOUT A SONG.

YOU KNOW THAT SONG, BOY?

tip!

MAYBE YOU CAN HUM A FEW BARS.

YEAH, COME OVER HERE AND I'LL WHISTLE IT.

OPEN

I'M CALLIN' THE SHERIFF.

NO! PLEASE! WE'RE LEAVING.

OPEN

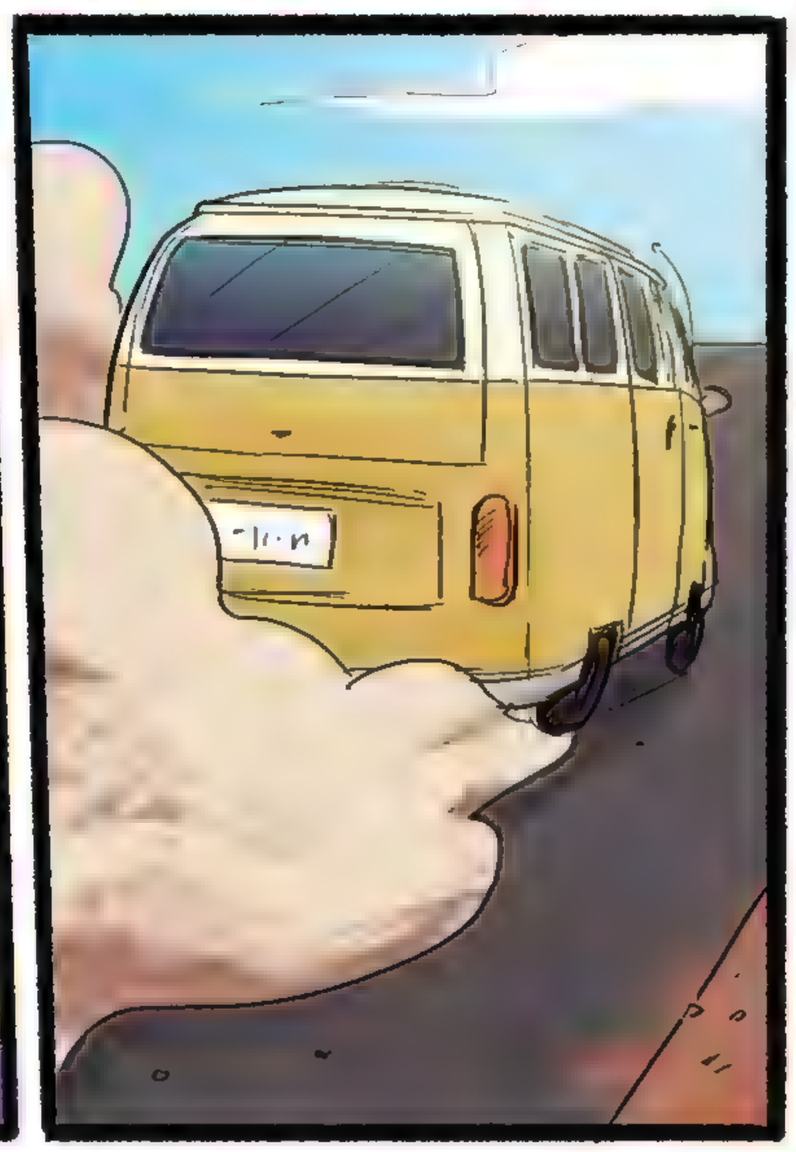
CASEY!

HEY.

YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST WALK IN HERE AND START SOMETHING AND RIDE OFF?

JED! I'M ABOUT TO CALL YOUR WIFE. DON'T MAKE ME GET HER OUT OF BED.

CASEY!



WHAT?!

WHAT?

YOU'RE MAD?

OH, BECAUSE I'M SUPPOSED TO BE THRILLED THAT YOU ALMOST GOT YOURSELF THROWN IN JAIL OVER NOTHING?

THAT GUY WAS A BULLY! I'M SUPPOSED TO SIT THERE AND JUST TAKE IT BECAUSE I DON'T WANT *MY GIRLFRIEND* TO GET UPSET?

NO! OF COURSE NOT! YOU'RE *SUPPOSED* TO GET IN A FIGHT WITH HIM! BECAUSE WE'RE OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE HUNTING *BULLIES!*

DON'T WORRY ABOUT WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO BE OUT HERE DOING.

WE!

WHAT?

WHAT *WE* ARE SUPPOSED TO BE DOING OUT HERE?

NO, I DON'T.

YOU KNOW THAT'S WHAT I MEANT!

SORRY I'M NOT GREAT WITH WORDS. I DON'T HAVE AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE IN MY BRAIN.

I'M PULLING OVER. *WE* NEED GAS.

GAS

I JUST GOT A SHRED OF A SIGNAL. THERE'S AN ARMORY.

IT LOOKS LIKE IT MIGHT CORRESPOND TO A SPOT THAT'S MARKED ON THE SCROLL.

FINE.

ACT LIKE YOU'VE NEVER SEEN ME GET IN A FIGHT.

YOU KNOW WHA—

CRACK!

WHAT WAS THAT?

WELL, LOOK AT THAT.

ARE YOU OKAY?

OH, IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN THAT TO STOP MY CLOCK, YOUNG LADY.

THIS OLD TRUCK, THOUGH...

IT'S MOSTLY THE FRONT BUMPER. BUT IT'S GOING TO TAKE SOME WORK TO UNWEDGE IT FROM THE WHEEL.

I'M SO SORRY!

NO TROUBLES. TED AT THE SHOP WILL FIX ME UP WHEN HE GETS BACK.

I WAS SUPPOSED TO STOP IN AT MY SISTER'S, THOUGH. SHE'S FEELING POORLY.

SHE'LL BE WORRIED IF I DON'T SHOW.

DOES SHE HAVE A PHONE? CAN WE CALL HER?

RED HASN'T HAD A PHONE IN DECADES.

HA. DECADES. WELL I COULD DRIVE OVER AND LET HER KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.

COULD YOU EXCUSE US JUST A MINUTE?

DON'T MIND ME. I'M JUST AN OLD MAN IN THE DESERT. *HEH.*

I THOUGHT YOU WANTED TO GO CHECK OUT AN OLD STORE OR SOMETHING.

YEAH, WELL, CLEARLY WE'VE HIT A BIT OF A SNAG IN THAT PLAN.

IT'S NOT SAFE FOR YOU TO GO ALONE.

APRIL.

I CAN HANDLE MYSELF TOO, CASEY.

ABOUT HOW FAR IS IT TO YOUR SISTER'S?

SHOULDN'T TAKE YOU MORE THAN AN HOUR.

YOU'RE WELCOME TO USE THAT BIKE IF THERE'S OTHER THINGS YOU NEED TO BE GETTING TO.

IT'S MINE.

OLD BUT IT STILL WORKS. THE GUYS JUST PUT GAS IN IT YESTERDAY.

I'LL MEET BACK HERE. TEXT ME IF YOU FIND ANYTHING.

YEAH.

APRIL.

WHAT?

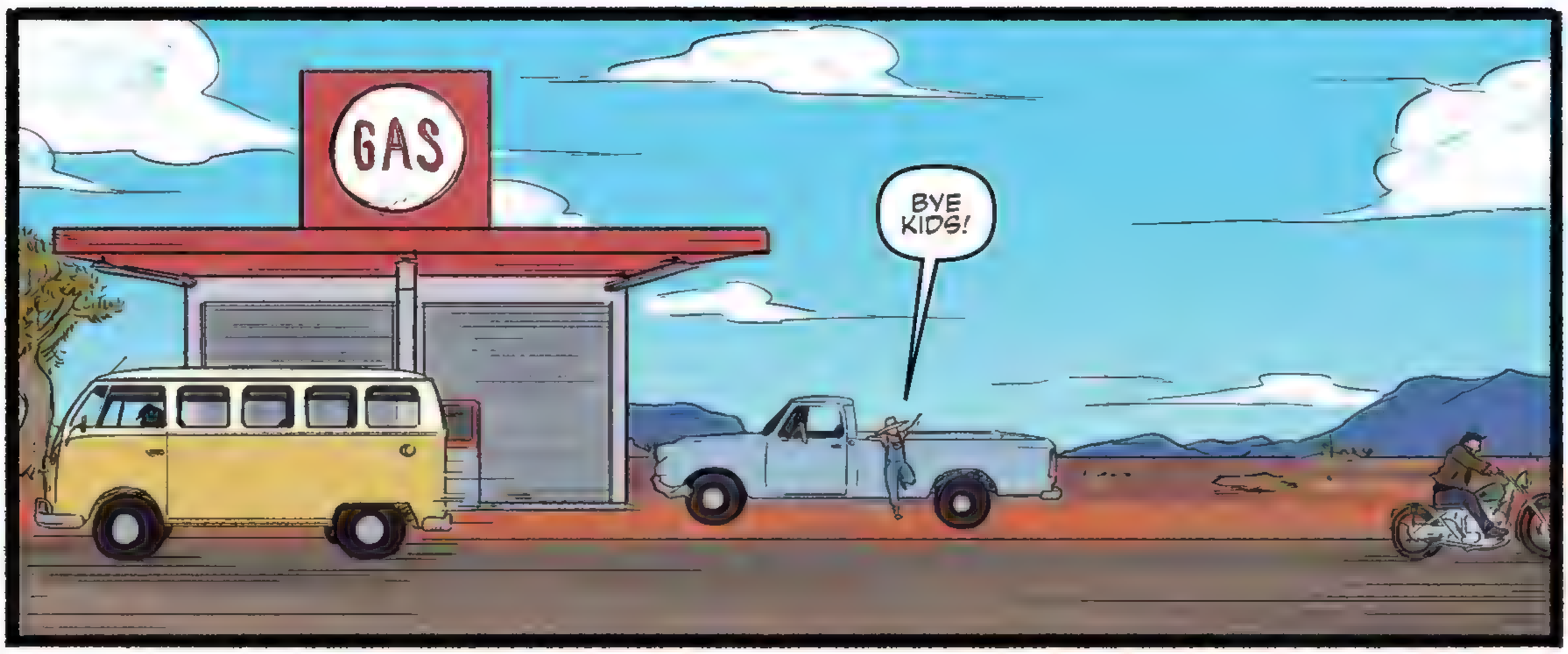
JUST. BE CAREFUL.

I KNOW.

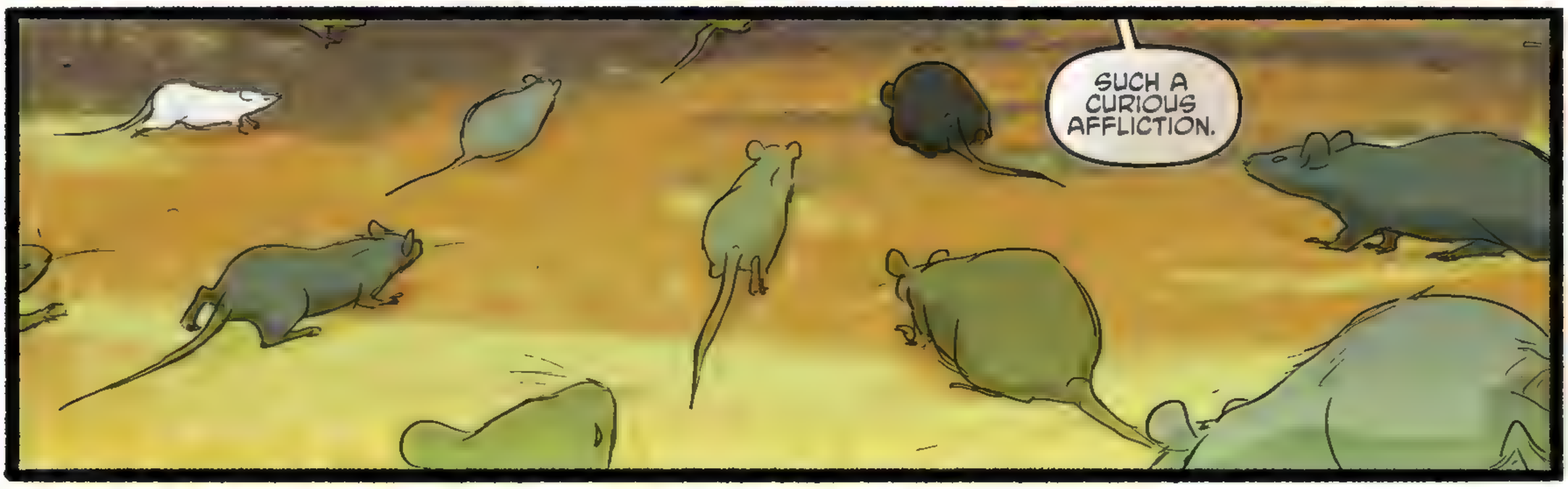
BACK IN A BIT!

THANK YOU KINDLY!

THANK YOU FOR NOT SUING US FOR HITTING YOUR TRUCK.


GAS
BYE KIDS!

YOUNG LOVE.


SUCH A CURIOUS AFFLICTION.

THESE HUMANS REALLY ARE SUCH STRANGE CREATURES.
BUT AMUSING, YES?
I THINK...

"...IT'S TIME FOR A LITTLE GAME."

IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I HAD ANY FUN.

art by FAITH ERIN HICKS
colors by PAULINA GANUCHEAU

CASEY & APRIL #2

art by IRENE KOH

LIKE A ROOOLLING STOOOOOOONE...

OKAY.

YOU'RE JUST GOING TO LEAVE A MESSAGE FOR SOME STRANGE OLD MAN'S SISTER, GO BACK TO THE GAS STATION WHERE YOU HIT THE STRANGE OLD MAN'S TRUCK...

...GET CASEY, AND CONTINUE YOUR WILD DESERT GOOSE CHASE, USING A SCROLL GIVEN TO YOU...

...BY A RECENTLY MURDERED PROFESSOR OF EAST ASIAN HISTORY.

PIECE OF CAKE.

YOU'VE GOT A FULL TANK.

ENOUGH GAS STATION SNACKS TO FEED A SMALL VILLAGE.

AND A VAN FULL OF MARTIAL ARTS WEAPONS.

SO STOP MOANING ABOUT...

...YOUR BOYFRIEND.

AND STOP TALKING TO YOURSELF LIKE A CRAZY PERSON.

...A FINE TIME TO LEAVE ME...

THIS IS AN ARMORY?

NO SERVICE

5:49

slide to unlock

YOU'RE *SUPPOSED* TO GET IN A FIGHT WITH HIM!

BECAUSE WE'RE OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE HUNTING *BULLIES!*

STUPID.

AAAIIIEEEE

HEY, I'M GLAD I COULD HELP.

I CAN'T BELIEVE I GOT IN A RENTAL WITHOUT CHECKING FOR A TIRE IRON.

CAN I GIVE YOU A HAND?

YOU CAN KEEP ME COMPANY AND KEEP AN EYE ON MY KIDS FOR A SEC.

THEY'RE SO CUTE.

AND SMART. IT'S A LITTLE SCARY.

I WAS KIND OF A BRAIN. WHEN I WAS THAT AGE.

NOT ANYMORE?

ECHINOCACTUS POLYCEPHALUS!

ECHINOCEREUS ENGELMANNII!

ARE YOU BLIND?

ARE YOU STUPID?

IT MUST BE SO COOL TO WATCH THEM GROW UP.

PLUS NOW I KNOW A *LOT* ABOUT PLANTS.

WHEN I WAS A KID, I WAS OBSESSED WITH SCIENCE, CHEMISTRY, HISTORY, ANYTHING I COULD GET MY HANDS ON.

ALL I DID WAS READ.

HOW DID THAT TURN OUT?

MOM!

MOM!

I DON'T KNOW.

"SOMETIMES I THINK THE ONLY TIME I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING IS WHEN EVERYTHING IS FALLING APART."

EVERYTHING FALLING APART SOUNDS PRETTY SCARY.

IT IS, BUT THEN WHEN EVERYTHING IS CRAZY, IT'S OBVIOUS.

NOW WHEN IT'S NOT CHAOS, I JUST FEEL...

"...LOST."

AIIIIIEEE

OOOOO

AAAAHHHH

BOOMBOOM

WHAT THE F—

GOOD WORK, GUYS.

I THINK THAT'S IT FOR TODAY.

REALLY GREAT.

HEY! ARE YOU MAX? I THINK WE'RE MISSING A MAX.

UH. NO. I WAS LOOKING FOR... AN ARMORY?

ARMORY? OH. MAYBE A LONG TIME AGO.

HELLO, BY THE WAY, I'M SAM.

CASEY.

CASEY. I WELCOME YOU.

WHAT IS THIS?

THE BROKEN SWORD! SPIRITUAL HEALING CENTER FOR MEN.

WE DO YOGA AND REIKI. GOT A GREAT REIKI GUY NOW.

WE'VE GOT A NEW ANGER MANAGEMENT GUIDE. TED. TED IS GREAT.

YEAH. THANKS FOR THE, UH, TOUR. I SHOULD SPLIT.

OH REALLY? I—

!!!

CAN I OFFER YOU A REFRESHING GLASS OF POMO—

AUGH! HELP!

KASH

I THINK WE'RE OKAY FOR ORGANIC REFRESHMENTS, MARCUS.

AGGRESSOR ON THE LAND!

A WHAT?!

YOU GET A LOT OF POMORANGE ATTACKS WHERE YOU'RE FROM?

POMORANGE?

LOOK, I'M SO—

YOU KNOW TED, OUR ANGER GUY, HAS THIS WHOLE SPEECH ABOUT HOW ANGER IS A MASK WE WEAR.

THE SCARIEST PART OF ANGER IS WHAT IT COVERS UP.

YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ME.

I CAN COUNT YOUR SCARS FROM HERE, BROTHER.

HAVE FUN IN YOUR CIRCLE. SORRY ABOUT THE JUICE.

NO ONE'S SAYING YOU HAVE TO SIT IN A CIRCLE, CASEY.

AT SOME POINT WE ALL HAVE TO LEARN TO EMBRACE THE THING THAT SCARES US MOST.

CHEER UP. SOME OF US NEVER KNOW WHAT WE'RE DOING!

THANKS. FOR LETTING ME SPILL MY GUTS AND EVERYTHING.

ANY TIME. STAY SAFE, OK?

I'LL TRY.

HELLO?

HEY.

HELLO?

RING

CAN YOU HEAR ME?

YOU'RE CUTTING OUT.

THE ARMORY. IT'S NOT AN ARMORY, IT'S A MEN'S THING.

A WHAT?

NEVER MIND. IT'S NOTHING.

WELL. I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY SIGNS OF A HOUSE OR A CAMPER OR ANYTHING. IT'S JUST DESERT.

THIS PLACE IS CRAZY.

SO I SHOULD PROBABLY TURN...

WHAT?

WHAT?

CASEY. DO YOU EVER FEEL LIKE—

I'M GOING TO HEAD BACK TO THE GAS— WHAT?

I JUST HAVE THIS FEELING LIKE...

I'M AT THE ARMORY.

YOU'RE BREAKING UP.

BREAKING UP?

APRIL? CAN YOU EVEN HEAR ME?

CASEY? I GOTTA GO.

FINALLY.

OKAY, RED, LET'S DO THIS.

CALL FAILED

AARRGH!

"I JUST HAVE THIS FEELING LIKE..."

NO SIGNAL

SO QUIET.

OKAY, APRIL. JUST RELAX, THERE'S NOTHING...

"...WRONG."

GAS

THIS THING IS... ANCIENT.

WHAT THE HELL?

IT'S ALL RUST AND COBWEBS.

HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?

SQUEEK

AHHH!

OH MY GOD.

APRIL.

SQUEEK SQUEEK

SQUEEK SQUEEK

APRIL!

HELLO?

IT'S GOTTA BE THE SAME GAS STATION. THERE'S NOTHING ELSE FOR MILES.

HOW COULD IT—

—CHANGE?

CREAK

!

UH, HELLO? I'M HERE WITH A MESSAGE FROM...

DAMN.

UH. RED? I'M HERE WITH A MESSAGE FROM YOUR BROTHER?

UNKNOWN CALLER

HELLO, WHO IS THIS?

KSSSHH

APRIL!

C'MON, APRIL, *PICK UP THE PHONE!*

?

APRIL!

IT'S A TRAP!

DAMMIT.

HI, UM, MY NAME IS APRIL?

IS THERE SOMEONE—

WAIT!

HEY!

APRIL!

I THINK WE HAVE JUST ENOUGH TIME TO GRAB SOME BARBEQUE. DON'T YOU?

YES. I THINK SO.

YOU WANT ANYTHING?

NO.

art by JENNIFER L. MEYER

CASEY & APRIL #3

art by IRENE KOH

"ANCIENT GREECE. VENGEFUL KING MINOS, RULER OF CRETE, INSTRUCTS HIS MAN DAEDALUS, GENIUS INVENTOR, TO BUILD HIM A MAZE.

"THE LABYRINTH."

"EVERY YEAR, THE ATHENIANS SENT SEVEN YOUNG MEN, AND SEVEN MAIDENS, TO BE SACRIFICED.

"OFFERINGS.

"BLOODY TRIBUTES.

"THEY SCAMPERED THROUGH THE DARK PASSAGES OF DAEDALUS' COMPLEX CONSTRUCTION LIKE..."

SQUEEK

EXACTLY.

HELLO?

OKAY. OKAY. CALM DOWN. YOU HAVE TO CALM DOWN.

"YOU HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE."

STILL NO SIGNAL!

ARGH!

GAS

SMACK

GOD, THEY'RE EVERYWH—

-AH!

WHAT THE HELL IS *THIS?*

PERFECT!

OK, APRIL. FIGURE OUT WHERE YOU ARE. MAP IT OUT.

SO THIS SIDE IS TWO, THREE.

FIVE, SIX STEPS ACROSS.

...TWO, THREE, FOUR?

...THREE, FOUR.

...FIVE, SIX, SEVEN, EIGHT?

?

?

WAIT, WHAT?

THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE.

STUPID.

THIS IS...

...POINTLESS!

JAPANESE FAUNA

ORNITHOLOGY

BIRDS

DAD, WHY DO I SPEND A MILLION HOURS RESEARCHING STUFF THAT NO ONE EVEN CARES ABOUT?

EVERYONE ELSE IS DOING EASY STUFF AND I'M WASTING A MILLION HOURS WRITING ABOUT STUFF NO ONE EVEN GETS.

I COULD JUST DO, LIKE, "WHAT IS AN OWL."

WOULD BE DONE BY NOW...

DUMB.

HARD WORK IS NEVER POINTLESS, APRIL.

IT'S AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW THE WORLD WHAT YOU DO WELL.

WHEN YOU GIVE UP, YOU'RE SHOWING THE WORLD THAT YOU'RE THE KIND OF PERSON...

"...WHO GIVES UP WHEN THINGS GET HARD."

I'M NOT GIVING UP, I'M JUST NOT SURE THIS IS WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO BE DOING, OKAY?!

DAD.

OH MY GOD, PLEASE GET IT TOGETH—

AAHH!!

!?

HEY!

"THE DEADLIEST ELEMENT OF THE LABYRINTH WAS THE CREATURE IT WAS BUILT TO IMPRISON."

NOW WHAT?

OLD MAN?

SNORT

WHAT IS THIS?!

"A DEADLY CREATURE."

"HALF MAN, HALF BULL. A FORMIDABLY MONSTROUS END FOR THE INNOCENT ATHENIANS WHO—."

EXCUSE ME. I KNOW YOU'RE ENJOYING YOUR STORY OF THE LABYRINTH IMMENSELY...

AND YOU ARE NOT?

NO TASTE FOR BLOOD AND GORE TODAY?

MY INTEREST WAS NEVER BLOOD AND GORE, BROTHER.

WHAT THEN?

=HUFF HUFF=

THE COMPLEXITY OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT.

"THE CAPACITY FOR HUMANS TO CARRY AND OVERCOME THE HISTORIES LODGED INSIDE OF THEM."

WHAT THE HELL?

AAAAHHH!

BAM
BAM
BAM

STOP CRYING! WHAT ARE YOU, A BABY? STOP CRYING! STUPID.

STOP. BEING. SCARED. BABY.

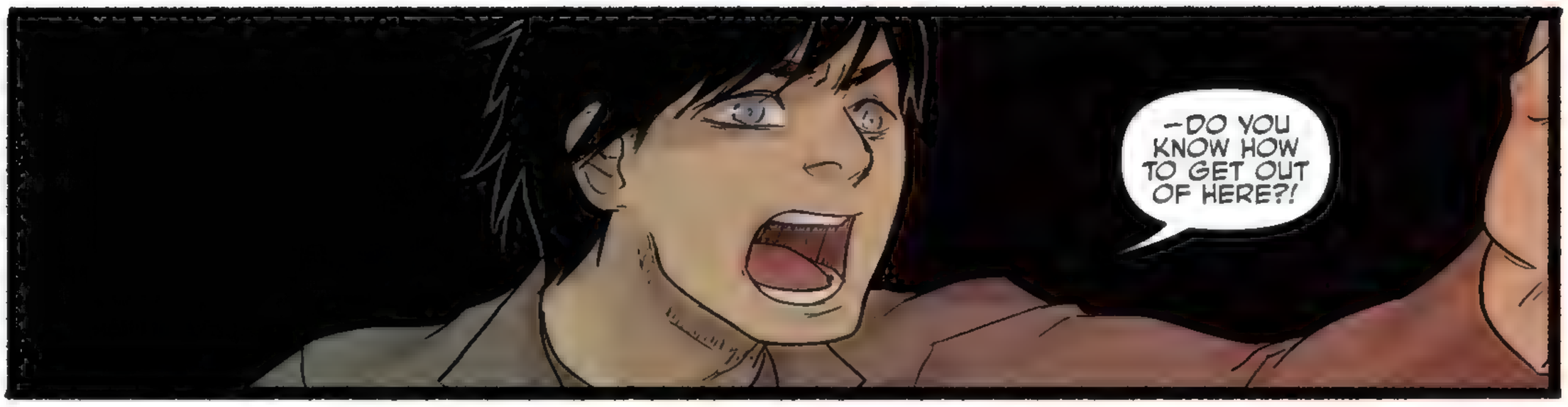
YOU CAN'T TOUCH ME NOW, STUPID OLD MAN.

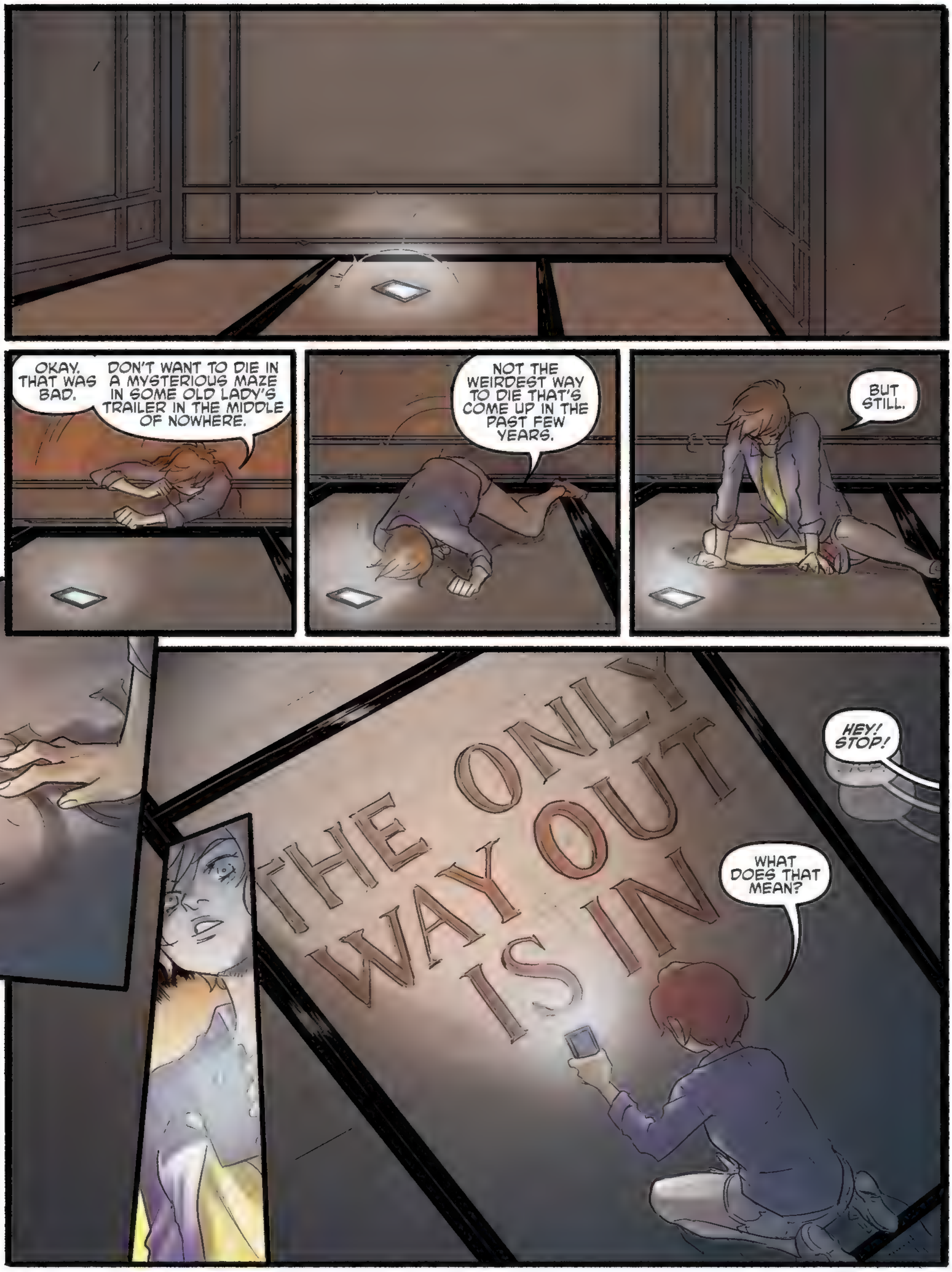
THAT YOGA GUY WAS RIGHT. WE'RE DAMAGED GOODS.

LEAVE ME ALONE!

HEY!

HEY, I KNOW YOU'RE ALL IN MY BRAIN BUT—


—DO YOU KNOW HOW TO GET OUT OF HERE?!


OKAY. THAT WAS BAD.
DON'T WANT TO DIE IN A MYSTERIOUS MAZE IN SOME OLD LADY'S TRAILER IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE.
NOT THE WEIRDEST WAY TO DIE THAT'S COME UP IN THE PAST FEW YEARS.
BUT STILL.
THE ONLY WAY OUT IS IN
HEY! STOP!
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

CASEY?

CASEY?

APRIL?

CASEY!

APRIL!

ARE YOU OKAY?

CASEY!

YES! ARE YOU?

WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

I DON'T KNOW.

HOLY COW, I'M GLAD YOU'RE OKAY.

I HATE CALIFORNIA!

YEAH, I CAN SEE WHY!

NOW WE JUST NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE.

RIGHT.

I GUESS THIS IS THE PATH?

I DON'T KNOW. IT LOOKS. TENUOUS.

YEAH. BUT I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANY OTHER WAY.

STAY THERE.

THIS IS SOME ROAD TRIP, HUH?

I KIND OF WISH WE WERE BACK AT THE DINER NOW.

BAD COFFEE.

TERRIBLE.

I'M SORRY I WAS A JERK.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE.

FOR THAT.

I'M SORRY WE SPLIT UP.

I DON'T WANT TO BE THE GUY—

CASEY, IT DOESN'T MATTER.

YOU'RE ONLY SAYING THAT BECAUSE I'M—

CRUMBLE.

CASEY!

CRACK

CRACK

APRIL, NO!

WHY DID YOU COME OUT HERE? YOU CAN'T SAVE ME! NOW WE'RE BOTH—

WOW. REALLY, THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO SAY TO ME RIGHT NOW?

I DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO HAPPEN TO YOU!

I DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO HAPPEN TO *YOU!* OBVIOUSLY.

LOOK. I READ THIS THING. I'M NOT SURE WHAT IT MEANS BUT, SINCE WE'VE GOT NO OTHER CHOICE...

WHAT WAS IT?

GRAB

"THE ONLY WAY OUT IS IN."

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
SO? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
I THINK IT MEANS THERE'S NO WAY *OUT.*
I THINK IT MEANS WE HAVE TO *GO IN.*
HOW DOES THAT WORK?
CRACK
CRACK
I THINK IT'S LIKE OUR THELMA AND LOUISE MOMENT.
WHAT'S THAT?
IT'S A MOVIE.
GEEZ! I'M NOT A COMPLETE IDIOT! I MEAN WHAT DOES THAT MEAN WE *DO?*
WE JUMP, TOGETHER. *IN.*
WELL, WE DON'T REALLY HAVE ANY OTHER CHOI—
CRACK
CRACK
CRACK
OKAY.
OKAY.
TOGETHER.

OOF!

WELL THEN. OUR GUESTS HAVE ARRIVED. HOW LOVELY.

art by MARLEY ZARCONE
colors by RYAN HILL

CASEY & APRIL #4

art by IRENE KOH

WHAT NOW SEEMS LIKE AGES AGO...

TIME TO GET BACK TO WORK. SEE YOU GUYS SOON.

OKAY. SO WHAT'S NEXT?

HOLD ON A SECOND.

APRIL! WAIT UP.

WHAT'S UP?

I DON'T KNOW. DÉJÀ VU? WHEN SPLINTER PASSED THE SCROLL TO ME, I GOT... A VIBE.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS?

MAYBE IT'S NOTHING. BUT IT FEELS LIKE... SOMETHING'S ABOUT TO GO DOWN, LIKE MAYBE THERE IS A REASON THE SCROLL ENDED UP IN OUR HANDS, YOU KNOW?

"MAYBE THIS IS SOMETHING FINDING US."

NOW.

SQUEAK SQUEAK

WATCH YOUR STEP.

WHERE ARE WE?

YOU ARE IN BETWEEN WORLDS, WHAT YOUR ACADEMIC COLLEAGUES WOULD DESCRIBE AS A LIMINAL SPACE.

CRACK!

EXCUSE THE MESS.

DIFFICULT TO KEEP THE DIMENSION BETWEEN WORLDS... TIDY.

IS THIS REAL?

REAL? INTERESTING QUESTION.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

NOT MADE OF THE SAME STUFF AS YOUR FRIENDS. ARE YOU?

WHO ARE YOU?

WHO AM I?

HOW CORDIAL OF YOU TO INQUIRE.

I AM THE RAT KING.

MAKER OF KINGS...

...AND CHAOS.

I WOULD SUGGEST IT WAS A PLEASURE TO MAKE YOUR ACQUAINTANCE, BUT I BELIEVE YOU AND I BOTH KNOW IT'S FAR MORE COMPLICATED THAN THAT, YES?

BROTHER...

...I THOUGHT YOU WERE RETRIEVING OUR GUESTS.

BUT OF COURSE! BEHOLD...

...THE YOUNG LOVERS!

COME THEN.

I HAVE BEEN EXPECTING YOU.

I'LL JUST MAKE MYSELF AT HOME.

I PROMISE. NO HARM WILL COME TO YOU HERE.

NOT A PROMISE YOU HEAR OFTEN FROM OUR FAMILY.

I IMAGINE YOU ARE HUNGRY.

UH. COULD YOU, UH, JUST GIVE US A MOMENT?

AND I AM SURE YOU HAVE QUESTIONS.

I DON'T LIKE THIS.

I KNOW. I DON'T TRUST *HIM*. BUT...

I THINK WE CAN TRUST *HER*.

HOW CAN YOU TRUST SOMEONE WHO HASN'T REALLY SAID ANYTHING YET?

IF I SAY THAT I THINK WE SHOULD SPLIT, ARE YOU JUST GOING TO GET MAD?

NO.

CASEY...

LOOK. I KNOW THIS TRIP...

WE CAN TALK ABOUT IT LATER.

MY GUT TELLS ME WE GOT TO GET OUTTA HERE.

MY GUT SAYS... THIS WOMAN IS WHY WE'RE HERE.

I KNOW YOU'RE WORRIED IT'S NOT SAFE BUT... SO FAR, WE'RE STILL OKAY. IF THEY WANTED TO KILL US...

OKAY. WE STAY.

WHENEVER YOU'RE READY.

IT'S A JOSHUA TREE PIZZA PIE.

MINUS THE KALE.

I HOPE YOU WILL BE PLEASED.

THANK YOU.

SO...

SO...

WE HAVE THIS. MY FRIENDS AND I ACQUIRED IT.

YOU SEEM TO KNOW WHO WE ARE.

YES. IT WOULD SEEM SO.

I GUESS, THIS IS WHO YOU ARE.

ALTHOUGH, OBVIOUSLY, WE'RE NOT EXACTLY SURE WHAT THAT MEANS.

AH, YES. A SMALL PIECE OF OUR FAMILY TREE.

PERHAPS IT IS BEST TO START NEARER THE BEGINNING.

I AM *AKA*...

...AND WE...

...ARE IMMORTALS.

WE ARE WANDERERS, EXPLORERS...

...SHAPE-SHIFTING CREATURES, GODS AND MONSTERS.

MILLENNIA AGO WE RULED THE EARTH.

"MANY OF US, INTENT ON WARRING WITH EACH OTHER.

"AND THEN..."

HUMANS.

"AS YOU MULTIPLIED AND MIGRATED ACROSS THE EARTH'S SURFACE, OUR GRASP OF POWER... LOOSENED.

"MANY OF US DISAPPEARED, WENT INTO HIDING, EMERGING EVERY DECADE OR SO...

"... TO SCRATCH THE SURFACE OF YOUR HISTORY."

ANY RECENT... SCRATCHES WE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT?

HMMMMM.

SUCH VIGOR.

<IF WE BROKE THIS ONE IN HALF WE'D FIND A BURNING FLAME.>

<BREAKING IN HALF IS NOT FITTING TREATMENT FOR GUESTS.>

NOR IS SPEAKING IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE. MY APOLOGIES.

TELL ME, HOW ARE YOUR FELLOW WARRIORS?

ONE IS... A SHELL OF HIS FORMER SELF?

YOU WANNA TALK ABOUT MY FRIENDS? TALK WITH RESPECT.

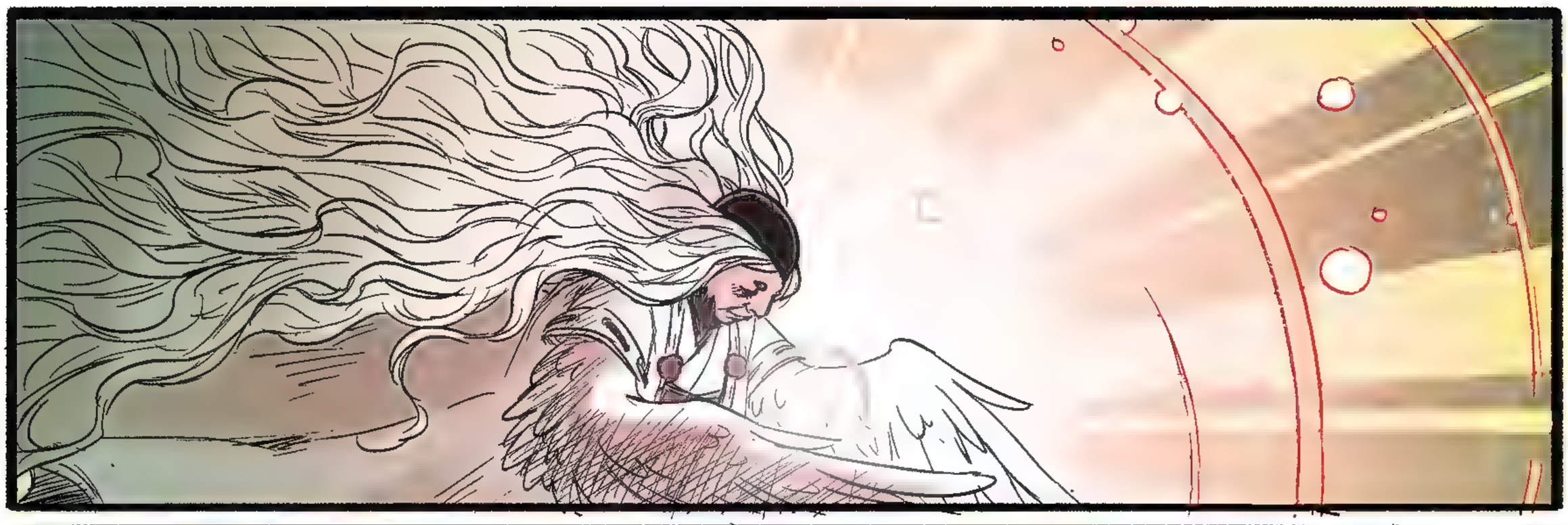
BOY.

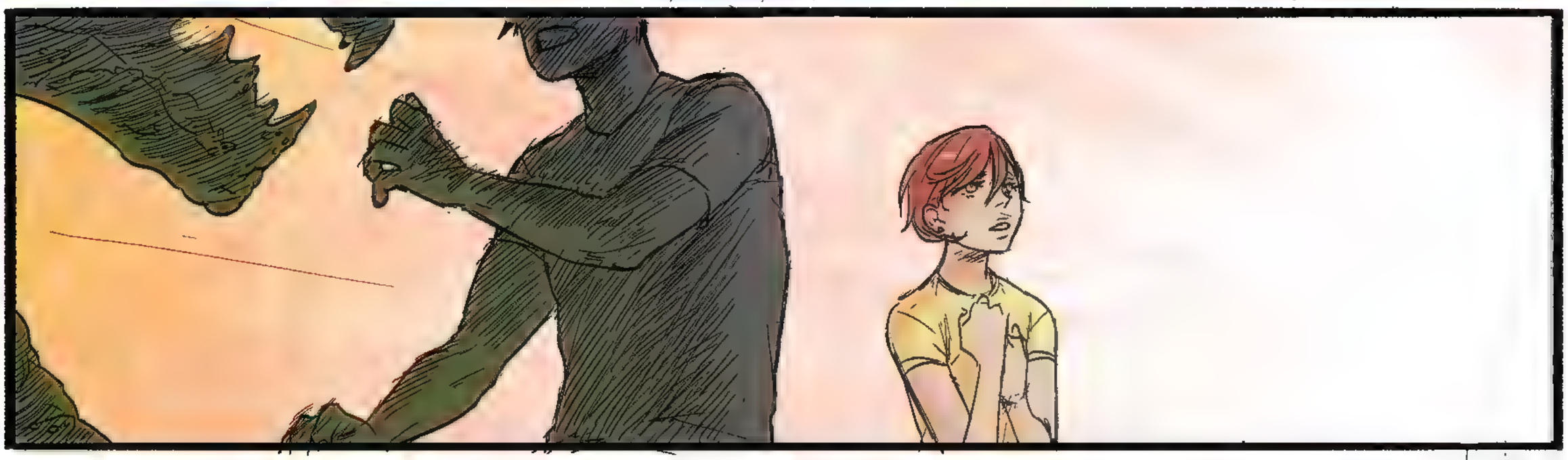
YOU MUST NEVER FORGET YOUR PLACE...

...AS A MERE AMUSEMENT.

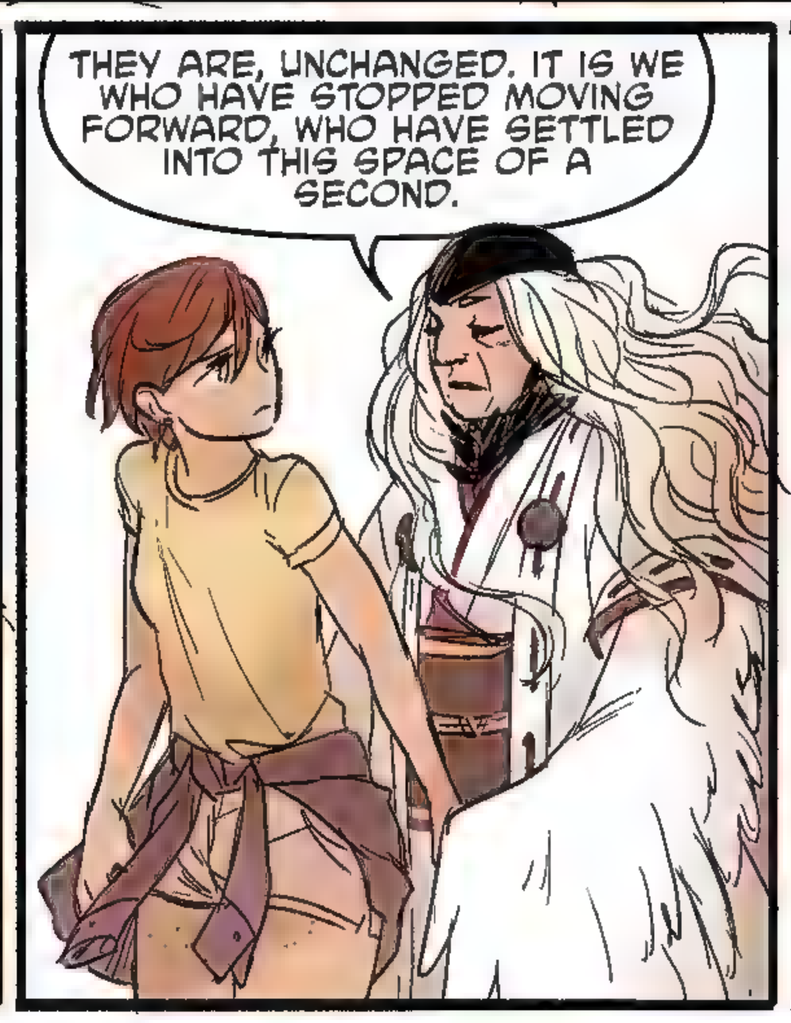
STOP!

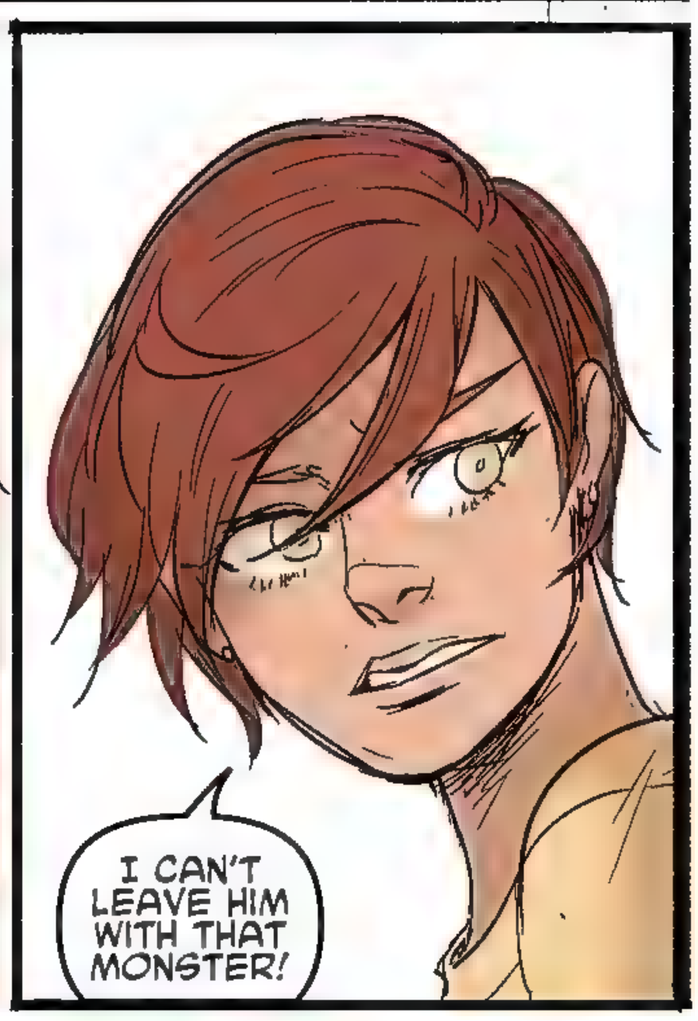
APRIL.





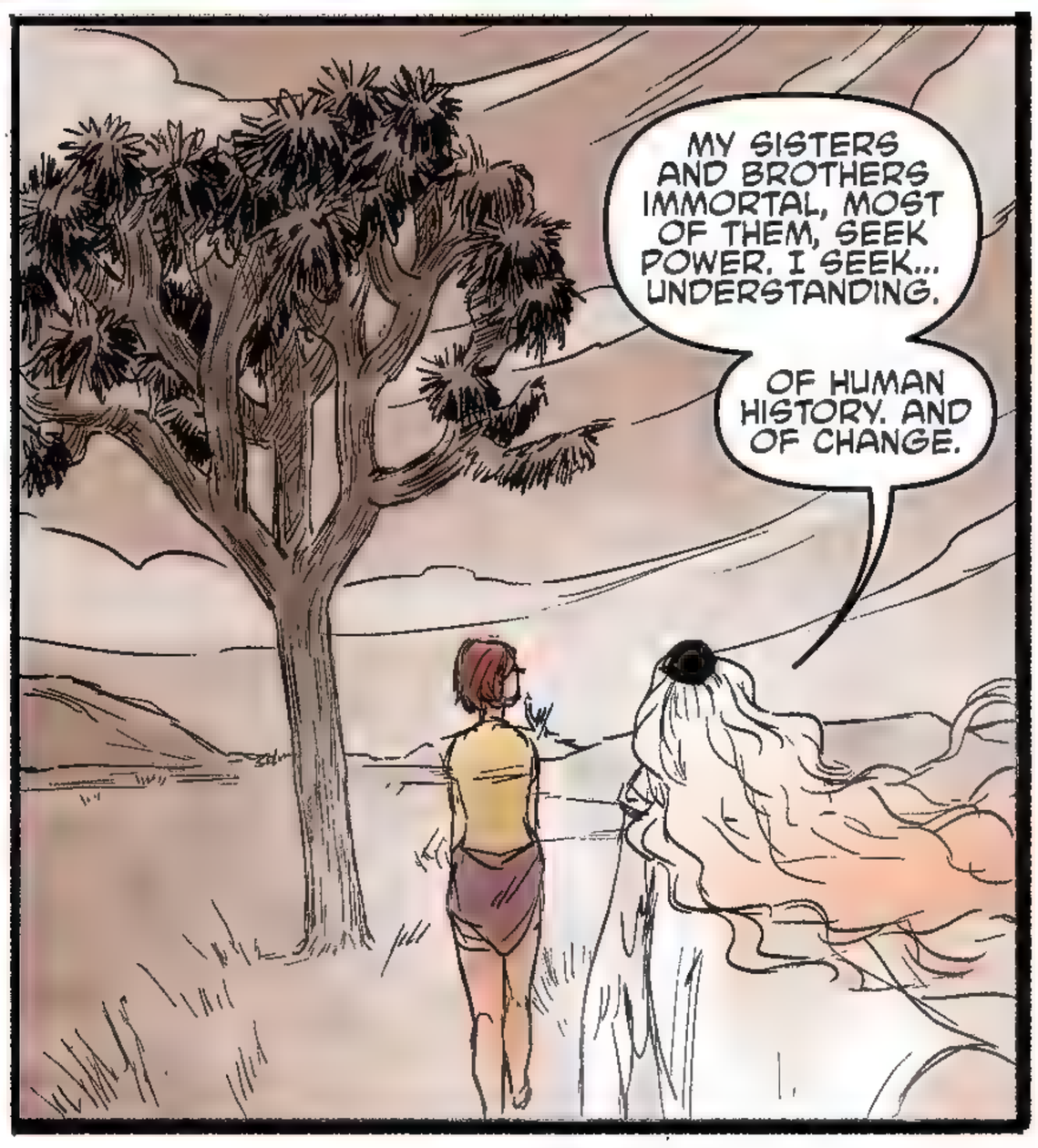
WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHERE DID THEY GO?


THEY ARE, UNCHANGED. IT IS WE WHO HAVE STOPPED MOVING FORWARD, WHO HAVE SETTLED INTO THIS SPACE OF A SECOND.


I CAN'T LEAVE HIM WITH THAT MONSTER!

MY BROTHER IS A TRICKSTER.
BUT LIKE ME HE IS RULED BY CURIOSITY, NOT MALICE.

THE BOY WILL BE SAFE. PLEASE.
APRIL O'NEIL.
COME.
I MUST SPEAK TO YOU.


MY SISTERS AND BROTHERS IMMORTAL, MOST OF THEM, SEEK POWER. I SEEK... UNDERSTANDING.
OF HUMAN HISTORY. AND OF CHANGE.

CHANGE UNFOLDS IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS.

IT CAN BE EXTRAORDINARY.

OR AS QUIET AS A REFLECTION IN STILL WATERS.

CHANGE IS WAR, STRUGGLE, CONFLICT, BUT ALSO METAMORPHOSIS, PHOTOSYNTHESIS.

SCIENCE.

YES.

EVERY NEW HUMAN... IS CHANGE. SOME HUMANS MORE THAN OTHERS.

DO YOU KNOW WHY I BROUGHT YOU HERE?

ME? NO.

CHANGE IS COMING.

MY FAMILY IS GATHERING. IT IS A NEW BEGINNING. A REVOLUTION.

A TIME...

"...FOR A NEW WAR."

APRIL?!

SUCH A DISAPPOINTMENT.

I WILL ADMIT I WAS CURIOUS.

AFTER MY ENCOUNTER WITH YOUR FRIENDS.

BUT NOW I SEE.

WHEN THE TIME COMES, YOUR WEAKNESS WILL BE YOUR END.

AND YOUR END WILL BE THE FALL OF THOSE WHO WOULD GIVE THEIR LIVES TO SAVE YOU.

NO.

YOURS IS A STORY ALREADY WRITTEN, BOY.

AND NOT EVEN IN RHYME.

YOU'RE WRONG.

EVERY BATTLE IS ONE STEP FORWARD.

A STEP TOWARDS YOUR UNDOING.

I THINK THAT'S ENOUGH RAT THERAPY FOR TODAY.

I BELIEVE THAT'S TIME, SISTER.

WAR.

WHEN IT COMES, I WILL LEAVE THIS PLACE.

BUT KNOW THIS, APRIL O'NEIL.

YOU ARE PART OF THIS CHANGE.

YOU ARE A BEGINNING.

RING

HEY!

HEY!

DID ALL THAT JUST HAPPEN?

OR WAS THAT JUST THE WEIRDEST DREAM ANYONE EVER HAD?

YEAH. UNLESS A DREAM IS A THING YOU CAN SHARE.

"I'M PRETTY SURE WE JUST MET SOME GODS."

I WAS THINKING ABOUT WHAT YOU SAID, ABOUT COUPLES WORKING TOGETHER.

IT'S HARD BECAUSE I WANT YOU TO BE... YOU KNOW... NOT DEAD.

YEAH.

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?

THE WOMAN, AKA, TALKING ABOUT CHANGE.

WHAT CHANGES?

RING

DUDE!

WE'VE BEEN TRYING TO CALL YOU! WHAT'S HAPPENING?

HOLD ON, I'M PULLING OVER.

WE BASICALLY JUST MET, I DON'T KNOW... IMMORTALS?

WHAT KIND OF IMMORTALS?

LEO! IT IS GOOD TO HEAR YOUR VOICE.

YEAH. A LOT TO SAY, MAN. I DON'T KNOW IF THE SCROLL HELPED BUT...

THE RAT AND BIRD KIND.

"RED."

APRIL?

YOU OKAY?

I THINK SO. JUST. BRAIN HEAVY.

WELL, YOU ARE THE BRAINS OF THE OPERATION.

THAT'S NOT GOING TO CHANGE.

LEO SAYS HI. I FIGURE WE CAN TALK TO HIM ONCE WE FIND A HOTEL.

I THINK I KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT.

COOL. SO WE'RE NOT TOTALLY LOST THEN?

STORMS AHEAD SO A WARNING TO ALL MOTORISTS.

I HOPE NOT.

"... AS YOU WALK ON BY..."

THE END

art by SOPHIE CAMPBELL

art by ZACH HOWARD

art by ALBERTO PONTICELLI
colors by JAY FOTOS

OLD HOB, SLASH, AND THEIR CREW ARE A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH, AND, WHEN SOMEONE CLOSE TO THE GROUP IS KIDNAPPED, THE MUTANIMALS END UP ON AN ADVENTURE MORE WILD AND DANGEROUS THAN THEY COULD EVER HAVE IMAGINED. THEN, THE TURTLES RETURN FROM BURNOW ISLAND TO FIND UNIMAGINABLE TRAGEDY. AS THE FAMILY STRUGGLES TO COPE, AN ENRAGED FOOT CLAN PREPARES ITS REVENGE. MEANWHILE, CASEY PREPARES FOR A FINAL SHOWDOWN WITH HUN AS THE PURPLE DRAGONS RUN AMOK, AND APRIL HAS COME INTO POSSESSION OF AN ANCIENT SCROLL THAT SEEMS TO POINT TO ANSWERS REGARDING THE PANTHEON. IT ALL LEADS TO A FINAL SHOWDOWN AS KARAI DECREES A GAUNTLET BATTLE BETWEEN SPLINTER AND SHREDDER.

VOLUME 6 COLLECTS THE *MUTANIMALS* MINI-SERIES, ISSUES #45–50 OF THE *TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES* ONGOING SERIES, THE 2015 FREE COMIC BOOK DAY ISSUE, AND THE *CASEY & APRIL* MINI-SERIES.

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ISSUE #50

art by MATEUS SANTOLOUCO

YO, KOYA AND BLUDGEON, THE WAY YOUSE TWO ARE ALWAYS TALKIN' 'BOUT *EATIN'* YER KILLS, I HOPE YER *REAL HUNGRY* RIGHT NOW.

'CAUSE *SOUP'S ON!*

CAN IT, JERK!

FZAK

GYAHH!

I'VE GOT A NEWSFLASH FOR YOU IDIOTS—

—WE DIDN'T COME HERE TO LOSE!

WOOSH

GUYS, I CAN ONLY KEEP THE BOZO BARBEQUE COOKING FOR SO LONG.

HOLD UP! NO MORE RUSHING IN HALF-COCKED. WE'RE NEVER GONNA BEAT THESE GUYS BY BRAWLING.

BUT—

LISTEN TO YOUR BROTHER, RAPHAEL...

...YOU MUST NOT LET YOUR OPPONENTS *DICTATE* THE FLOW OF THE BATTLE.

THEY RELY ON BRUTE STRENGTH AND CHAOS. IF YOU ARE TO DEFEAT THEM, YOU MUST COUNTER WITH SPEED AND SKILL, INTELLIGENCE AND BEARING.

CONTROL *YOURSELVES* AND YOU CONTROL THE *FIGHT.*

FATHER'S RIGHT. I HATE THOSE PSYCHOS AS MUCH AS ANYONE, BUT WE CAN'T MAKE THIS *PERSONAL* RIGHT NOW OR WE'RE NO GOOD TO EACH OTHER.

TIME TO DO THIS LIKE A *TEAM.*

AND NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT...

...'CAUSE I'M RUNNING OUTTA GAS.

WHY DO YOU *DAWDLE,* FOOLS?!

DESTROY THEM!

YOU HEARD THE MASTER!

SKREE

OKAY, HERE THEY COME. WE CAN *DO* THIS, GUYS.

WE *HAVE* TO...

"...FOR FATHER."

FOR FATHER!

HNH?

HUPP!

DAHH!

FAKK

FWP

DUDE, I TOTALLY *JUMPED THE SHARK!*

TOO EASY, MIKE... TOO EASY.

NOTHING'S EASY TODAY.

WE'VE GOT THEM CONFUSED— NOW LET'S *SCATTER* AND KEEP THEM OFF BALANCE.

OFF BALANCE?

GREAT IDEA!

YOU *ALL RIGHT*, B?

STUPID LASERS.

SKREEEEEEEEEEEE

GAH!

KRAMM

YO, FISH BREATH. *CANDY-GRAM.*

WHA—

SKREE

CHAK

HEH. CANDY-GRAM.

GOOD ONE, RAPH.

SMP

BAPF

GAH!

PATHETIC *TRICKS* WON'T KEEP YOU—

—HIDDEN?

IMBECILES!

THEY HAVE *STOLEN* YOUR ADVANTAGE!

YOU ARE *LOSING CONTROL!*

CONTROL YOURSELF...

YOU ASK ME...

DUDE, WHAT'S *FATHER* DOIN'?

"...LOOKS LIKE HE'S GETTIN' READY FOR *HIS* TURN."

...CONTROL THE FIGHT.

LET'S *FINISH* THIS...

"...SO FATHER WON'T HAVE TO FIGHT *BY HIMSELF.*"

"TAKE HEART, YOSHI— YOUR PRECIOUS SONS ARE *WITH* YOU..."

...YOU WILL NOT *DIE ALONE* THIS DAY.

NO, SAKI! THEY ARE...

...INNOCENT.

NO, I SEE FOUR *SOLDIERS*, GUILTY OF KNOWINGLY *COLLABORATING* WITH A SWORN ENEMY OF THE FOOT CLAN.

ARE THEY?

I THINK *NOT.*

GUILTY OF COLLABORATING WITH *YOU*, HAMATO YOSHI.

BUT... THEY ARE ONLY *BOYS.*

AS WERE *WE* WHEN WE FIRST TOOK UP OUR KATANA. YET, YOUTHFUL AS WE WERE, WE KNEW ANY GUILT THAT BELONGED TO OUR MASTER BELONGED TO *US* AS WELL.

WHY SHOULD IT BE ANY DIFFERENT FOR *THESE* FOUR? YOU CHOSE TO *BETRAY* THE FOOT AND THEY, IN TURN, CHOSE TO *FOLLOW* YOU. AND NOW *ALL* WILL PAY THE JUST PRICE FOR THOSE DECISIONS.

I WILL *NEVER* ALLOW DEFIANCE OF MY RULE TO GO UNPUNISHED.

"AND SO, LOOK *THERE*, HAMATO YOSHI—"

"—LOOK TO THE SONS YOU HAVE *DRAGGED* INTO YOUR BETRAYAL."

C'MON, MIKEY!

WE SHOULD PROBABLY BRING *FLOWERS* FOR THE DATE, DUDE.

WAY *AHEAD* OF YOU, LITTLE BRO.

FWP FWP

SHNK

YOW! WASPS!

THOSE AIN'T *WASPS*, ROC—

OW! OW!

OW. OW.

GONG

MAN, *LOOK* AT THOSE DORKS.

WE SHOULD JUST LET 'EM BEAT *EACH OTHER* UP.

YOU KNOW, MIKE...

"...I THINK YOU'RE *ONTO* SOMETHIN'."

BURNOW ISLAND.

OKAY— I'VE GOT THE FINAL FLOW-TUBE ATTACHED.

WE'RE READY FOR THE OOZE INSTILLATION.

I THINK YOU'LL FIND THIS IS *LESS* AN INSTILLATION, PROFESSOR...

CLIK

...AND *MORE* OF A DELUGE.

BUT A *HEALING* DELUGE, RIGHT?

I SUPPOSE WE'LL *SOON* FIND OUT.

SPEAKING FROM MUCH *PERSONAL EXPERIENCE*...

...AN UNKNOWN OUTCOME *WON'T STOP* YOU SCIENCE TYPES FROM CONDUCTING YOUR LITTLE EXPERIMENT, *WILL* IT?

...IT CAN'T.

NO—NOT THIS TIME, IT WON'T.

WITH ALL THAT'S AT STAKE...

"YOU *WASTE* YOUR TIME..."

...*PRAYING* FOR THE THINGS YOU DESIRE WHEN, IN TRUTH, ONLY *ACTION* WILL SUFFICE.

THERE ARE THOSE WHO WOULD SAY MEDITATION AND PRAYING ARE, AT TIMES, THE *ONLY ACTIONS* SUFFICIENT FOR ONE'S CAUSE, SAKI.

FOR PRIESTS AND THE POWERLESS, PERHAPS. BUT *WE* ARE WARRIORS, YOSHI. NINJA.

OUR DESTINIES ARE FORGED ON THE BATTLEFIELD—NOT TRAIPSING *MINDLESSLY* THROUGH THE ASTRAL DOMAIN.

MINDLESSLY?

IT'S NOT OFTEN I HEAR SUCH PALPABLE IRONY FROM *YOUR* LIPS, BROTHER.

FEH! CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL. IT MAKES ME *NO LESS* RIGHT.

I THINK *MASTERS MAJI* AND *MASATO* WOULD DISAGREE.

THEY MIGHT...

...WERE THEY *STILL ALIVE.*

BUT THEY ARE NOT. AND NO AMOUNT OF MEDITATING WILL CHANGE THAT FACT.

NO. BUT WE CAN STILL *HONOR* THEIR MEMORY.

TELL ME, SAKI...

...HOW MUCH LONGER DO YOU INTEND TO WREAK *MINDLESS* DESTRUCTION IN THE NAME OF THE FOOT CLAN?

HOW LONG? UNTIL *ORDER* IS ESTABLISHED—ABSOLUTE ORDER *UNDER* THE FOOT.

AND *YOU* OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW, YOSHI, ORDER *ONLY* COMES...

"...FROM CHAOS."

THIS IS CRAZY, DUDE!

TOTALLY CRAZY.

YEAH—BUT MAYBE JUST CRAZY ENOUGH TO WORK.

C'MON, YOU BIG DUMMIES...

...WHAT'RE YOU WAITIN' FOR?

YEAH, WE'RE RIGHT HERE. STANDIN' STILL.

LIKE TWO INSANE PEOPLE.

GRAH!

KILL 'EM!

NOW, MIKE!

WHERE DID YOU GO, LITTLE WORM?

YOU KNOW WHAT BIRDS DO TO WORMS, YES?

YEAH, YEAH— YOU EAT THEM.

CAREFUL YOU DON'T CHOKE!

SKAWK!

WHOP

"LOOKS LIKE BIRDBRAIN'S IN SOME SERIOUS TROUBLE..."

KRAK

...ARE YOU GONNA JUST LET YOUR FRIEND GO DOWN LIKE THAT WITHOUT LIFTING A FIN TO HELP?

NO! MY WINGS!

KOYA?

FZZAKK

AHH!

GRARR!

OH, THAT INJURY LOOKS BAD.

WE BETTER PUT A LIGHT ON IT.

YAHH!

I CAN'T SEE!

"DUDE, I THINK DONNIE AND LEO ARE *WINNIN'*."

BUT ARE *WE?!*

FWAM

FWAM

FWAM

PRETTY MUCH, YEAH.

FWAM

WE GOT THESE GUYS KNOCKIN' THE STUFFIN' OUTTA EACH OTHER, *DON'T* WE?

QUIT *HITTIN' ME*, PAL!

I AIN'T *TRYIN'* TO! 'SIDES, YOU HIT *ME!*

YEAH, BUT THEY GOT *A LOT* OF STUFFIN'. WE TOTALLY DROPPED A *WHOLE BUILDIN'* ON 'EM ONCE, REMEMBER?

NYAH! NYAH!

COME AND *GET* US, TWEEDLE-DWEEB AND TWEEDLE-DUH!

GET 'EM!

DIS IS ALL *THEIR* FAULT!

LUCKY FOR US, MOST OF THAT STUFFIN' IS *BETWEEN* THEIR EARS.

"YOUR FRIENDS FIGHT *INTELLIGENTLY...*"

...THEY FIND *STRENGTH* IN THEIR OPPONENTS' WEAKNESSES.

CUNNING.

LIKE *FOXES.*

BUT WE ARE THE ONLY *TRUE FOXES* HERE, CHILD. YOU MUST *REMEMBER* THAT AFTER THIS RITUAL HAS BEEN COMPLETED.

YES, THE VICTORS WILL BE THE STRONGEST AND THE MOST CUNNING. BUT THE *SPOILS* OF THEIR VICTORY?

THOSE WILL GO TO THOSE *MOST SLY.*

ALOPEX? *ALOPEX!*

WHA... WHAT?

YOU OKAY? YOU LOOKED LIKE A *ZOMBIE* OR SOMETHIN'.

YEAH, I... GUESS I JUST *SPACED OUT* FOR A MOMENT.

SNAP OUTTA IT. YOU'RE *MISSIN'* THE WHOLE FIGHT.

HOW ARE THE *TURTLES* DOING? ARE THEY WINNING?

WELL, THEY *AIN'T LOSIN'.*

OH... THAT'S GOOD TO HEAR.

"I CAN'T *SEE* YOU!"

KOYA! WHERE ARE YOU?! I'M... I'M BLIND!

HERE, BLUDGEON!

HELP ME! PLEASE!

KOYA?!

UFF!

SWIP

GET AWAY FROM HER! CAN'T YOU HEAR? SHE'S DONE!

YEAH. I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT.

YOUR WINGS! WHAT... WHAT HAPPENED, KOYA?

THE TRAITOR— LEONARDO. BROKE MY WING AND STOLE MY FEATHERS. JUST AS THE ROBOT STOLE YOUR EYES.

WHEN I HEARD YOU SCREAM, I... I LOST FOCUS ON THE FIGHT AND—

STOP. IT DOESN'T MATTER. WE HAVE BOTH FAILED.

THIS FIGHT DOESN'T BELONG TO US ANYMORE.

"OKAY, THIS IS GETTIN' EMBARRASSIN'!"

UFF!

THE *MORE* WE GET THESE IDIOTS TO WALLOP EACH OTHER...

"...THE *MORE* THEY KEEP GETTIN' UP."

YOU DID IT *AGAIN*, DUMMY!

WHO YOU CALLIN' *DUMMY*, DUMMY?!

AND THE MORE *POOPED* WE GET. *PHEW!*

MAYBE IT'S TIME FOR A *NEW* PLAN.

LEO! ROBO-BRO! *THANK GOD!*

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE *BIRD* AND THE *FISH?*

GROUNDED.

SEEING THINGS IN A NEW LIGHT.

WHATEVER. WE STILL GOT THE *NIMROD TWINS* TO DEAL WITH.

WE MADE 'EM BEAT EACH OTHER UP... BUT I THINK THEY *LIKE* IT.

TIME TO START BEATING THEM UP *OURSELVES*, THEN. RAPH'S NOT THE *ONLY ONE* ITCHING FOR SOME SERIOUS PAYBACK.

WAIT. HOLD THAT THOUGHT, LEO.

YES, I'M LISTENING.

NOW? YOU'RE SURE?

...

YOU DON'T SOUND SURE.

WHO'S HE *TALKIN'* TO?

GOT ME.

WHOEVER IT IS...

"... HE NEEDS TO MAKE IT *REAL QUICK.*"

SORRY 'BOUT *CONKIN'* YOU ON THE HEAD BEFORE, ROCK.

AND CALLIN' YOU A DUMMY.

NOT *HALF* AS SORRY AS THOSE *GREEN LOSERS* ARE 'BOUT TO BE, B.

OKAY... IF YOU THINK SO. HOW MUCH TIME?

C'MON, C'MON, DONNIE...

OKAY. SHOULD BE ENOUGH.

GOOD LUCK.

PUT YOUR WEAPONS DOWN, GUYS, AND STAND BACK.

DONNIE, WHAT ARE Y—

NO TIME FOR EXPLANATIONS, MIKEY.

LET'S JUST SAY, I LEARNED THE HARD WAY THAT CONVENTIONAL FIGHTING WON'T STOP BEBOP AND ROCKSTEADY.

HEY, WHAT'S THIS TIN CAN DOIN'?

COMMITTIN' SUICIDE.

BYE, FELLAS. IT'S BEEN A BLAST.

NO—THAT'S GONNA TAKE SOMETHING A BIT MORE DRASTIC.

SELF-DESTRUCT:
ACTIVATED

BA-BOOM!

DONNIE!

WHAT IS THIS?

DONATELLO?

OH... NO.

STUPID ROBOT.

THOUGHT HE COULD... :KOFF:... BLOW US UP.

YEAH... :KOFF: NOW HIS STUPID BROTHERS ARE GONNA NEED A :KOFF: *VETERAN* TO FIX 'EM UP WHEN WE'RE DONE WITH 'EM.

IT'S *VETERINARIAN*...

GONG

...STUPID.

CLANG

NO...

...FREAKIN'...

WAY...

MAN...

...THAT FELT *GOOD*.

DONNIE!
WELCOME BACK, BRO.
WHOA! KETTLE DRUM!
KONG
HEH, YEAH—*NEW AND IMPROVED*, JUST LIKE MY BO-STAFF. ALL COURTESY OF FUGITOID.
AND YET THE *SAME* HEROIC WARRIOR YOU HAVE *ALWAYS* BEEN.
FATHER!
YES, MY SON. AND VERY *PROUD* TO BE SO.
YOU WILL SOON HAVE TO *SHARE* HOW PROFESSOR HONEYCUTT WAS ABLE TO BRING YOU BACK TO US IN SUCH A FASHION, MY SON.
BUT FIRST...
...I KNOW YOU ARE WEARY FROM THE FIRST BATTLE, BUT I MUST ASK THAT YOU FIND THE STRENGTH WITHIN YOURSELVES TO CARRY ON *WITHOUT ME* FOR A SHORT TIME LONGER.
WITHOUT YOU?
YES, MICHELANGELO. BEFORE DONATELLO SURPRISED US WITH HIS RETURN, I WAS SEEKING ANSWERS ON THE ASTRAL PLANE—SEARCHING FOR *CLUES* FROM THE PAST TO HELP ME DEFEAT SAKI.
I HAVE *YET* TO FIND THEM.

OKAY. THIS IS IT. WE'VE *TRAINED* FOR THIS. WE'VE *BLED* FOR THIS. WE'VE NEARLY *DIED* FOR THIS.

AND NOW WE WILL *FINISH* THIS. AND IF WE CAN'T, THEN WE DO WHAT WE CAN TO BUY SENSEI THE *TIME* HE NEEDS. TOGETHER.

WHAT CAN *WE* DO, MASTER SPLINTER?

PRAY, CHILD.

PRAY WITH ALL YOUR *HEART* AND *SOUL*.

ARE YOU QUITE *FINISHED*, YOSHI?

I GROW *TIRED* OF THIS DELAY.

YOU ARE RIGHT, SAKI— THIS SACRED RITE IS ONLY *HALF* COMPLETE, AND THE FIRST VICTORY BELONGS TO *CLAN HAMATO*.

BE THAT AS IT MAY, IT IS YOUR RIGHT, AS THE CHALLENGED, TO CHOOSE *WHERE* WE FIGHT THE FINAL BATTLE IN THIS RITUAL.

I CHOOSE THE ROOFTOP.

SINCE YOU ENJOY SPENDING SO MUCH PRECIOUS TIME IN YOUR HEAD WANDERING THROUGH THE *COSMOS*...

"...WHY NOT LET THE HEAVENS BE *WITNESS* TO YOUR DOOM?"

COME THEN, SONS OF HAMATO YOSHI.

KNOW YOUR BETTER.

RRGG!
SWIP
KNOW THIS, JERK!
SHNK
CRETINS!
KRKK
UHH!
SMAK
WHFF!
HEY, SHREDDER— REMEMBER ME?
FUMP
HM. THE DUPLICITOUS DONATELLO.
DON'T KNOW WHAT DUPLICITOUS MEANS...
...BUT YOU'VE BEEN DUPED, OROKU SUCKY!
CRAK
DUPED? INDEED.
SOMETHING YOU MUTANTS SHOULD WELL UNDERSTAND.
LED LIKE CATTLE TO THE ABATTOIR.
GUILELESSLY FOLLOWING YOUR FATHER TO HIS DOOM.
THE FILTHY RODENT WHO SLEEPS THROUGH YOUR SLAUGHTER.
SHALL WE CONTINUE?

YES! LET'S!

AH, THE FAILED CHUNIN.

THE FIRST TO ATTACK.

SHING

GRFF!

THE FIRST TO FALL.

FALL? WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED, SHREDDER.

I PROMISE YOU—SO AM I.

PROMISE?!

SHNK

I MADE A PROMISE, TOO!

KRAK

A PROMISE TO *NEVER FORGET* HOW BADLY YOU *HURT* ME WHEN YOU SENT YOUR GOONS AFTER ME!

A PROMISE TO NEVER LET YOU HURT *ANYONE ELSE* LIKE THAT AGAIN.

YOU WASTE YOUR BREATH WITH ALL THIS *TALK* OF PROMISES. YOU MAY HAVE NEW POWER.

BUT...

I.

AM.

POWER!

HRRK!

PITIFUL.

YOU'RE LOOKIN' PRETTY DAMN *SMUG*, SHREDHEAD.

TIME TO WIPE IT *OFF* YOUR UGLY FACE.

"CONTROL YOUR ANGER!"

YOU WILL *NEVER* KNOW TRUE VICTORY THAT WAY!

YOUR FURY HAS COST YOU YOUR *BALANCE*, BOY!

HA! I'VE GOT YOU *NOW*, YOSHI!

HUH?!

AND *YOU*, SAKI! ALWAYS *TOO EAGER* TO STRIKE YOUR OPPONENTS WHEN THEY APPEAR DEFENSELESS!

AH, LOOK AT YOU BOTH—NEARLY DROWNING IN YOUR *SHAME* AND *CARELESSNESS*.

ONE WHO WOULD LET *ANGER* RULE HIS ACTIONS, ANOTHER WHO IS DRIVEN BY AN *INSATIABLE* NEED FOR DOMINANCE.

DO YOU NOT SEE—IF YOU DO NOT LEARN WHERE THESE COMPULSIONS *COME FROM*, AND HOW TO *USE THEM* INSTEAD OF ALLOWING THEM TO *USE YOU*...

"...THEN YOU ARE DOOMED *ALWAYS* TO FALL."

STAY *DOWN*, FOOL!

YOU POSSESS THE SAME BURNING SPIRIT YOUR *FATHER* ONCE OWNED—BEFORE HE *SURRENDERED* TO WEAKNESS AND COMPASSION.

A SPIRIT I WILL *WELCOME* INTO THE FOOT ONCE HE IS GONE.

YEAH?

OVER MY *DEAD* BODY.

SO BE IT.

HNH!

SWIP

FWK

BUT UNDERSTAND, MY OFFER *WAS* SINCERE.

SWIP

RAAGH!

SHLP

YOU WILL REGRET SO FOOLISHLY *TOSSING* IT AWAY.

DAMMIT!

GOT YOU, BRO!

SWAK

NO MORE!

UNF!

I'M SO SICK OF YOU! ALWAYS HURTIN' PEOPLE!

HIYAH!

FUD

ALWAYS HURTIN' MY FAMILY!

IMPRESSIVE. I DID NOT EXPECT SUCH FIRE FROM YOU.

I'M NOT TRYIN' TO IMPRESS YOU, SHREDDER.

I'M TRYIN' TO STOP YOU!

GYAAH!

A PITY THIS NEW ANGER LEAVES YOU UNBALANCED...

"...UNHINGED."

FWAK WHAP

NOT SO BIG NOW, EH?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

STOP!

UNFF!

DON'T YOU SEE HE'S *DONE*, SAKI?!

HM. I SEE IT *NOW*. THE WEAKLING.

WHY WOULD YOU *ATTACK* HIM LIKE THAT?

BECAUSE HE TELLS *EVERYONE* HE IS THE STRONGEST AND THE TOUGHEST. I WANTED TO SHOW HE WAS *WRONG*.

BUT HE'S NEVER THREATENED *YOU* DIRECTLY!

DOES IT MATTER?

YES, SAKI, IT *DOES*. MASTER MASATO SAYS WE ARE ONLY TO FIGHT IF WE *HAVE* TO.

PRECISELY. I DID WHAT I *HAD* TO.

SO, ARE YOU GOING TO LET THAT HOT ANGER OF YOURS *OUT* NOW, YOSHI? SHOULD I PUT *YOU* IN YOUR PROPER PLACE, TOO, *EH*?

NO, SAKI— NOT *THIS* TIME. JUST REMEMBER, YOU MIGHT BE THE STRONGEST AND TOUGHEST...

"...BUT YOU *DON'T* FRIGHTEN ME."

AH, YOSHI. *AWAKE* FROM YOUR DAYDREAMS, I SEE.

YES, YOU *COULD* SAY I HAVE AWAKENED.

WHILE YOU BATTLED MY BRAVE SONS, I MEDITATED ON OUR *HISTORY* TOGETHER, SAKI, LOOKING FOR ANY FRAILTIES YOU MAY HAVE— WEAKNESSES I COULD *EXPLOIT* IN THE BATTLE TO COME.

AT FIRST ALL I SAW, AS I TRAVELED STEP-BY-STEP THROUGH OUR SHARED PAST, WAS YOUR *INNATE* AND *UNDENIABLE POWER*.

"BUT THEN I *RECALLED* SOMETHING MASTER MASATO TOLD US WHEN WE WERE BOYS—ABOUT HOW OUR MOST *PRIMAL* IMPULSES CAN BE EITHER BOON OR BANE.

"IT WAS, HE SAID, ALL A MATTER OF UNDERSTANDING *WHY* WE POSSESSED THEM... AND, THEN, HOW BEST TO *CHANNEL* THEM.

"FOR ME, IT WAS AN UNPREDICTABLE *RAGE* THAT FESTERED INSIDE, ALWAYS READY TO ERUPT AND UNLEASH WRATH AGAINST THOSE I FELT HAD CAUSED ME PAIN.

"BUT I LEARNED OVER TIME MY FURY WAS SIMPLY *MISGUIDED SELF-PROTECTION* AND ALLOWING IT TO FLOW UNABATED CAUSED MORE HARM TO *MYSELF* THAN ANY OF MY ENEMIES.

"IT WASN'T UNTIL I LEARNED TO CONTROL IT, AS MASTER MASATO HAD ENCOURAGED SO MANY TIMES, THAT I *FINALLY* KNEW *TRUE PEACE*..."

...AND *TRUE STRENGTH*.

STRENGTH?

WHATEVER STRENGTH YOU POSSESSED *VANISHED* THE MOMENT YOU EXTINGUISHED THE RAGE-FIRE BURNING INSIDE OF YOU, RAT.

YOU MISUNDERSTAND, SAKI.

I NEVER SAID I PUT *OUT* THE FIRE.

I SAID I KNOW HOW TO *CONTROL* IT NOW. WHEN TO SUBDUE IT...

...AND WHEN TO *UNLEASH* IT!

CRAK

CHUD

I LEARNED *SOMETHING ELSE* TODAY, TOO.

FWAP

HOW TO DIE?

NO.

SWIP

IN *TWO* LIFETIMES, YOU HAVE SOUGHT TO DESTROY ME!

MY FAMILY!

KANG

TO CRUSH *ALL* THAT IS IMPORTANT TO ME—ALL THAT I *LOVE!* ALL OUT OF VENGEANCE!

GRF!

ALL TO PROVE *NONE* DARE DEFY Y—!

NNH!

CHOK

THERE ARE *TWO PATHS*, YOSHI—ONE FOR THE MEEK, ONE FOR THE POWERFUL.

WE MUST *ALL CHOOSE* WHICH TO FOLLOW. UNLIKE YOU, I CHOSE *GREATNESS.*

YOU ARE WRONG—THERE ARE *MANY PATHS* TO CHOOSE FROM. AS FOR ME...

I CHOSE *DUTY!*

I CHOS— *GRK!*

YOU CHOSE *PAIN*, FOOL.

SUFFERING.

GYAHH!

SHIIK

AND DEATH!

FWOMP

DEATH AWAITS US *ALL*. IN THAT... WE HAVE *NO* CHOICE.

AND YET, *YOU* SPEAK OF IT AS A FATE BELONGING *SOLELY* TO OTHERS.

IT IS TRUE—YOU ARE *VERY* POWERFUL, SAKI. BUT I UNDERSTAND NOW IT IS A POWER THAT CHOSE *YOU*, AND NOT YOU *IT*.

A POWER THAT *DELUDES* YOU INTO BELIEVING YOU CANNOT BE DEFEATED. CANNOT BE DESTROYED.

BUT YOU ARE *WRONG*.

YES, DEATH *CAN* BE ESCAPED—WE *BOTH* KNOW THIS—BUT *ONLY* FOR A TIME.

YOU CHIDE ME FOR MY "MINDLESS" PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE ASTRAL PLANE, NEVER REALIZING IT HAS IN FACT MADE ME VERY *MINDFUL* OF DEATH'S DOMINION OVER ALL THINGS.

UNLIKE YOU, DEATH IS A THING I HAVE COME TO *RESPECT* AND, I AM UNASHAMED TO ADMIT—FOR THE SAFETY OF MY CHILDREN—TO *FEAR*.

BUT IN YOUR BLIND CONFIDENCE, YOU HAVE *FORGOTTEN*, OROKU SAKI...

I HAVE NEVER FEARED YOU!

BUT... HOW...

HRNNG... GHH... HRNN...

IT IS TIME TO TAKE THE POWER *BACK*, SAKI.

TIME TO CONTROL *THAT* WHICH HAS CONTROLLED YOU FOR SO LONG.

TIME TO BE *STRONG*.

WE... WE WERE FRIENDS, YOSHI. *BROTHERS*.

AND THEN YOU... YOU TURNED YOUR *BACK* TO ME. WHY?

I DID NOT INTEND TO TURN MY BACK TO *YOU*, SAKI—ONLY TO WHAT YOU HAD *BECOME*.

BUT PERHAPS IN MY *RASH* ANGER, I ACCOMPLISHED BOTH.

FOR THAT, I AM *TRULY* SORRY.

THIS... THIS IS *NOT* HOW... IT WAS SUPPOSED TO END.

IT *NEVER* IS, MY FRIEND. DO YOU REMEMBER THE *FOREST* WE ONCE PLAYED IN AS SMALL BOYS? THE *DREAMS* WE SHARED?

YES. DREAMS OF *WARRIOR GLORY*. OF... OF *SHARED HONOR*.

I HAVE *NEVER* GIVEN UP ON THOSE DREAMS. EVEN IN THE *DARKEST* HOURS.

AND SO... THE POWER IS NOW IN *YOUR* CONTROL, OROKU SAKI. WHICH PATH DO YOU CHOOSE IN THESE, YOUR *DYING* MOMENTS?

I... *HRFF*... CHOOSE THE *DREAM*, YOSHI.

I CHOOSE A *WARRIOR'S* HONOR.

THEN IT IS *MY HONOR* TO HELP YOU KNOW THE DREAM ONCE AGAIN.

GRANDDAUGHTER, HEAR ME NOW. YOU ARE MY *FINEST* SOLDIER.

IF I HAVE EVER BEEN HARSH ON YOU, IT WAS FROM *PRIDE*...

...PRIDE IN YOUR *INDOMITABLE STRENGTH* AND *LOYALTY.*

HAI, MASTER.

<KITSUNE... I HAVE FAILED—BUT I DO *NOT* ACCEPT FAILURE.>

<IF WHAT YOSHI SAYS IS TRUE—IF THERE *ARE* MANY PATHS...>

<...I WILL FIND THE ONE THAT LEADS *BACK* TO YOU.>

<AND I WILL BE *WAITING,* MY DRAGON WARRIOR.>

AND *YOU,* HAMATO YOSHI...

HRRGG!

I WILL SEE YOU IN THE FOREST AGAIN... BROTHER.

I DO NOT DOUBT IT.

MY BROTHER.

YOUR SWORD, MY SON.

THANK YOU... FATHER.

OH... GOD.

THIS *ISN'T* REAL.

HOW IS YOUR LEG, RAPHAEL?

NO BIGGIE, SENSEI. I'LL LIVE.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR *SHOULDER*, FATHER?

I, TOO, WILL LIVE, DONATELLO.

HAMATO YOSHI!

BACK OFF, KARAI—WE'RE *DONE* HERE.

I ONLY WISH TO *SPEAK* TO YOUR FATHER, LEONARDO.

PLEASE. SPEAK, OROKU KARAI.

I AM *LISTENING.*

THE *JONIN* OF THE FOOT CLAN IS *DEAD*.

AS CHUNIN, IT IS MY DUTY TO *RISE UP* AND BECOME MASTER. MY *DUTY* TO RULE.

AND WOULD YOU *CONTINUE* YOUR GRANDFATHER'S *VENDETTA* AGAINST US, CHILD?

OR WOULD YOU *HONOR* THE *RIGHTEOUS OUTCOME* OF THESE ANCIENT RITES?

I WOULD DO THAT AND *MORE*, HAMATO YOSHI. THE FOOT CLAN IS MY FAMILY—MY LIFE—AND I WANT *ONLY* WHAT IS BEST FOR IT.

TODAY, I HAVE WITNESSED TRUE HONOR—TRUE LEADERSHIP.

AND I UNDERSTAND NOW THAT I MUST LOOK TO THE *PAST* IF I AM EVER TO ATTAIN THOSE *SAME* ATTRIBUTES. TO WHERE IT ALL BEGAN.

TO *JAPAN*.

THEREFORE, I HUMBLY *OFFER* MY GRANDFATHER'S THRONE—AND MY SWORD—TO YOU...

...*MASTER SPLINTER*.

AND I HUMBLY *ACCEPT* YOUR OFFERING TO *LEAD* THE FOOT CLAN, OROKU KARAI.

JUST AS I ACCEPT...

...YOUR SWORD.

NO.

I'M DONE.

I... CAN'T BE A *PART* OF THIS.

NOT ANYMORE. NOT IF *THIS* IS WHAT ALL THE FIGHTIN' TURNS US INTO.

WAIT, MIKEY, IT'S NOT—

DON'T TOUCH ME.

DO NOT *STOP* HIM, LEONARDO.

HIS CONFUSION IS *UNDERSTANDABLE*. THIS NEW PATH IS UNEXPECTED FOR ALL OF US.

WE MUST GIVE YOUR BROTHER THE SPACE HE NEEDS TO UNDERSTAND IT FOR HIMSELF... IN HIS *OWN* WAY.

WITH YOUR PERMISSION, MASTER, I WOULD *DEPART* IMMEDIATELY AS WELL, *ACCOMPANIED* BY A SELECT FEW.

OF COURSE, OROKU KARAI— YOU MAY TAKE ANY SOLDIERS YOU BELIEVE WILL *BENEFIT* FROM SUCH A JOURNEY.

KITSUNE, HOWEVER, WILL *REMAIN* HERE...

"...UNDER MY *WATCHFUL* EYE."

SO WHAT'S NEXT, FATHER? WHAT DO *WE* DO NOW?

NOW, LEONARDO?

"I *TOLD* YOU, SAKI!"

I TOLD YOU THE *FOREST* WAS FUN!

YOU'RE *RIGHT*, YOSHI! IT'S LIKE A *DREAM!*

AND THIS PRACTICE WILL REALLY *HELP* US, TOO, WHEN WE START *TRAINING* WITH MASTER MASATO!

THEN WE'LL BE ABLE TO BE *TOGETHER* A LOT!

LIKE *BROTHERS!*

AND WE'LL BECOME *GREAT WARRIORS!*

AND MAYBE IF WE TRAIN HARD ENOUGH...

"...WE CAN *BOTH* BECOME *GREAT MASTERS* SOMEDAY!"

NOW...

...WE *EMBRACE* OUR DESTINY.

EPILOGUE.

FEUDAL JAPAN.

THEY ARE LEAVING...

...WHAT ARE YOUR *ORDERS*, SIR?

HM. FOUR CHILDREN AND ONE OLD MAN, AND YET THEY WERE WORTHY OF SAKI'S ***PERSONAL*** ATTENTION? THERE WAS SOMETHING... ***ODD*** ABOUT THIS EXECUTION—***THAT*** MUCH IS CERTAIN.

SEND ***CHIEF SCIENCE ADVISOR MA'RIELL*** AND HER TEAM DOWN TO COLLECT ***DNA*** AND ***QNA SPECIMENS*** FROM THE BODIES, LIEUTENANT SULFURCH.

MAYBE IT'S SOMETHING I CAN USE TO MY ***ADVANTAGE*** AGAINST THESE SWORD-SWINGING BARBARIANS SOMEDAY.

AS YOU WISH...

...***GENERAL KRANG.***

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